

A HISTORY
OF ENGLISH LIFE

POLITICAL AND SOCIAL

by

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and

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AUTHORS' FOREWORD

THE authors have tried, all through this history, to keep two points before the reader. First to show in each age how ordinary families, the mass of English people, lived. The second point they have specially tried to bring out is the progress made in science, art and invention and the way in which each discovery grew out of the needs and ideas of its own age and in turn changed the life of the generations that came after.

But the way in which a country is governed has a great deal to do both with the way in which ordinary people live, and with the progress made in science, invention, art, and learning, progress in such things in turn brings about changes in the way in which a country is governed. Therefore they have kept in a good deal of the 'constitutional' and political side of the story which is to be found in most histories. But since there is so much in this book about such things as changes in the way land was farmed, about tools and machines, about scientists, writers and inventors, some of the more familiar historical events and persons have had to be written of rather more briefly than they are in most histories. There had, for instance, to be less about John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough, and his wars, because there was already a whole chapter on Sir Isaac Newton and the Royal Society. But the facts that have been left out, or only described very briefly, are chiefly those that are most easily to be found in other short histories. As King Alfred, when he had finished one of his summaries, wrote —

'I did not wish to bring the whole wood home even if I could carry it. Therefore I exhort everyone who is able, and has many wagons, to wend his way to the same wood where I cut the props.'

Here the reader has got the outline of the tale of one nation's growth and change

Not all nations have changed or grown. There are still tribes to-day which live almost exactly like the tribes which are described in the first chapter of this book—using stone tools, sheltering in little huts, dressing in skins. But in this country people's ways of living, ideas and knowledge have, as the reader knows, changed immensely, and in this book we have tried to show the stages by which such great changes came about, and the origins of the strange and mighty devices by which we are surrounded to-day.

One sort of omission, necessary, if the book was to be kept to a reasonable length, they do regret, however. They wish there had been space for more 'comparative evolution', that is, for more description of the various ways in which the same sort of problems were solved in other countries where there has also been growth and change.

But there is more in other books (there is a list of some of them at the end and a note on how to get them) about every possible thing or person that may have caught the fancy of the reader of this book, whether it be Old Paris, exploration, architecture, shipbuilding, dress, mining, magic, astronomy or the history of Charles Darwin, Charlemagne, Louis Pasteur or Louis XIV.

A. W. E.

F. J. F.

ILLUSTRATOR'S NOTE

THOUGH some of the pictures in this book might be called 'imaginary' I have tried as far as possible to suggest the style of drawing suitable to the age it represents.

I should like to thank all who have so kindly helped me in obtaining new and amusing material, and especially Mr W. H. Sharpington, who drew the lettering on the charts and maps throughout the Series.

W. H.

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VOLUME I
FROM PREHISTORIC TIMES
TO 1066

‘ My inner and outer life depend on the labours
of other men, living and dead, and I must exert
myself in order to give in the same measure as
I have received and am still receiving ’

ALBERT EINSTEIN

PART ONE

CHAPTER I

BEFORE BRITAIN BECAME AN ISLAND

THOUSANDS of years ago great forests and swamps covered England, and over the very places where to-day we live and work, there rushed herds of wild pig, reindeer, elk and great hairy elephants, while giant beavers built their dams in the swamps

Huge cave-bears slept out the long dark winters in Cave-bear holes and in caves, and woke again with their new-born cubs and looked about them at the spring sunlight and at trees that were growing brown with the swelling of their buds But before the forest there had been bare, cold grassland, and before that, another sort of forest, and before that, sheets of ice hundreds of feet thick For, as the slow ages passed, there were many changes, so that these places that we know so well, looked at one time like the Siberian Steppes, at another like the thick forests of Tasmania

Perhaps the men and women who wandered into First Men Britain, over a plain where the tides of the English Channel and the North Sea now flow, were the first human beings who ever set foot in the tangled forests of this country, or who first bogged themselves in the bottomless swamps of the Thames valley

We call the people who walked into Britain from the Old Stone South, when the River Rhine skirted the east coast of Age

Norfolk, the men of the Old Stone Age—the Paleolithic ¹ people

They were smaller than the men and women of to-day. A grown man was not more than five feet high, which is now an average height for a boy of eleven or twelve.

When these little half-naked people fished or gathered cockles or picked berries or hunted small beasts for food, big beasts hunted them. The big prehistoric lizards were all dead, but besides gluttons, cave-bears and wild cats, there were very big flesh-eating mammals such as the terrible sabre-toothed tiger and an enormous kind of hyena, while the great woolly rhinoceros, with a horn three feet long, though perhaps not as a rule flesh-eating, was probably as bad-tempered and dangerous as his smaller African descendant is to-day.

The little people sheltered in holes and caves, they hid from their enemies, and from the cold and darkness of the forest.

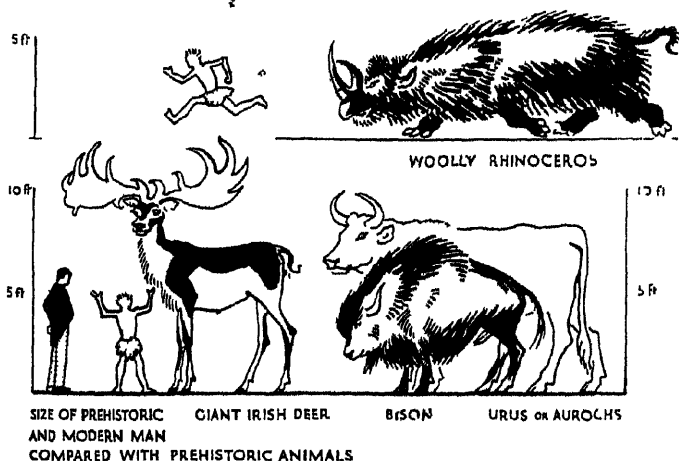
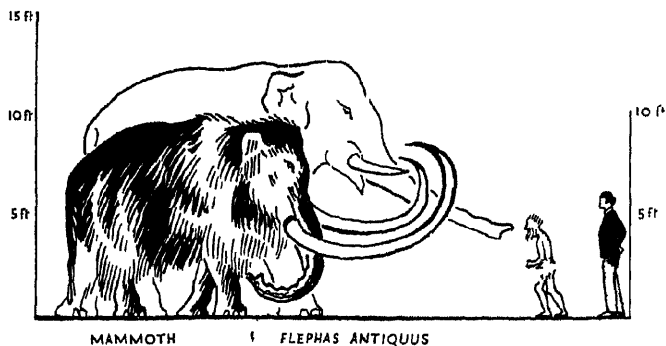
Men, not
Ground
Apes

But they were men and not beasts—not ground apes like the baboon—for they walked on their hind feet only, and so their hands, being left free, were more supple and sensitive than paws. With these hands they grasped and held. They used a stick to reach up to the crab apple that was too high, they flung a stone at a rabbit, or hammered oyster shells open, and if the stone was not the right shape for throwing, hammering, or scraping, they took another stone and chipped it till it was. Above all they differed from any sort of ground ape because

Fire

they used fire, and warmed themselves and cooked their meat, and frightened off the great beasts that hunted them. With their shaped flints the women of the Old Stone Age scraped the hides of the beasts whose meat they had eaten, and then used the hides to cover themselves. Probably, they also made skin bottles for carrying and storing water. They made other tools too, such as needles, out of the bones of the beasts they had killed, and they used reindeer antlers as picks to get out the

¹ 'Paleo' means old. 'Lithic' here means stone-using



BEASTS WERE BIGGER, MEN SMALLER

flints they wanted, and sometimes, on a flat bit of bone, they would draw pictures

II

Now if this sort of description of the people of the Old Stone Age—which is now to be found at the beginning of most history books—if this tale had been told to our great-great-grandfathers, most of them would not have believed a single word of it! How, they would have argued, could all this about fire, and tools, and walking across plains where the sea now roars, possibly be known? For, if he were a savage, Old Stone Age Man could certainly not have written down his history, and therefore it must be sheer invention to speak so certainly about what he knew and did not know!

Can you believe all this?

But there are all sorts of ways of finding out about past events without being told about them in so many words. This is a fact that every tracker and every detective knows.

It has been by using the methods of tracking and detection that this story can be told. For, out of two bits of knowledge, it is often possible to make a third, and so to build up, on one sort of evidence and another, an almost complete picture of what happened long ago. Certain clues had always been there for anyone to see, but nobody managed to piece them together.

Detectives

These clues were, first, the actual stone hammers and other shaped flints that Old Stone Age Man had chipped. These were found scattered about in various parts of the South of England—on the downs of Wiltshire and Sussex, for instance—in caves, and half made in flint quarries. Other clues were bones that Old Stone Age Man had shaped for tools, and others that he had gnawed and that had been roasted.

Clues

These things, when they were found, were not of course neatly labelled 'Paleolithic—(Old Stone Age)' as they are in museums to-day. But it was fairly easy to see that these queer hand-axes were not natural stones.

Some False Ideas Country people often found them, but they called them 'pixy hammers' and thought that the fairies had made them, just as they thought that the 'Green Hills' and the stone and earth tombs—called barrows—of later races of early man here (the men of the New Stone and of the Bronze Ages) had been made by elf-kings or by giants

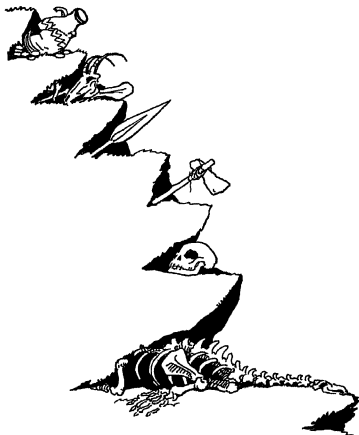
Giants and Fairies But presently there came a time when grown people no longer believed in the existence of fairies or giants. They came to think that however real this sort of being might be in people's imaginations, fairies never had chipped flints, or giants or saints flung up those 'spade-fuls of dirt' that we now call primitive forts or earth-works. It was then—less than two hundred years ago—and only then, that learned men began to be able to make sense of the clues

For now it was clear that anything that was not 'natural', and could not have been made by a beast, must have been made by a man

And the people who had the clues in their hands already knew a good deal about a man. A man could not go more than a certain number of days without food or water, he could probably not have lived in England without some sort of hole, cave or hut, and some sort of clothes to protect him from the weather. He must somehow have got all these things or else he would have died. Again, it would only be after he and the women and the children had got enough of these things to keep alive, that he could find time to draw pictures, or drag about great stones to make temples such as Stonehenge, or tombs such as the great barrows

Lowest oldest Another discovery—but this time a new-found geological fact, and not the dying out of an old mistaken belief—helped to make sense of the clues. This was the discovery of the stratification of the earth. As far as the history of man and beast is concerned, the new fact that the geologists had discovered meant this—*lowest is oldest*. Suppose that in a quarry or a gravel pit, as

the soil and rock were dug away, bits of pottery, coins, charred sheep bones, a bronze spear blade, a flint axe, a human skull, the jaw bone of a bear, the horns of a reindeer and the shoulder blade of a great flesh-eating



LOWEST-OLDEST

lizard such as tyrannosaurus were found, then these things would be found in one particular order

Unless there has been an earthquake or a landslip or the place had been dug over before, the things found lowest are always oldest, while the less ancient will lie above them. Geological history is written backwards. See how this works. For instance, it was thought at

first that the Old Stone Age people had lived at the same time as the giant lizards, Brontosaurus, Tyrannosaurus and so on. But later it was noticed that though the bones of a Brontosaurus might be found in the course of the same digging as an old stone axe, yet the stone axe always lay nearer the surface, and that there would be a layer of soil and stones between the two. This layer, the geologists found, represented a difference in time of several thousand years.

Bits of
Knowledge
put together

Thus, what is now known about the people of the Old Stone Age, the New Stone Age, and the Bronze Age (that is the long periods of man's life before he left any written history), has been pieced together by a very careful examination of clues, exactly as the story of an accident or a burglary which no one had witnessed might be pieced together by a detective.

III

Exploring
Wookey Hole

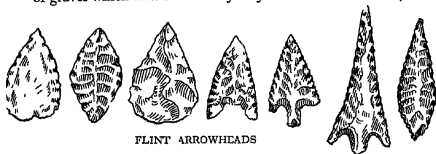
Perhaps it would be interesting to take one example of how the work is done, and to describe the exploration of a particular set of caves in which the explorers found clues which made them believe that many generations both of men and beasts had made these caves their home.

Wookey Hole is the name of a series of huge caverns in Somerset, which have been formed by a shallow river that runs out through limestone cliffs. The Great Cave was one of the biggest cave-dwellings in England. But it was in a small cave, in the cliff of the narrow gorge that leads up to the Great Cave, in which the earliest remains were found. They were uncovered when a canal was being dug to bring water-power from the stream that flows from the cave to work a paper-mill (in 1852, Queen Victoria's reign).

The Hyena
Den

As they dug, the men came quite by chance upon a hole in the hard rock and cut into its side. This rock space (which was called afterwards 'The Hyena Den') was found to be full of ancient bones, stones, gravel, stone implements and all sorts of scraps. The things of

latest date were a number of Roman coins, and the earliest were broken bones of mammoth and woolly rhinoceros. Not less than three old floors lay under the newer mass of gravel which had come in by way of a hole in the roof,



FLINT ARROWHEADS

and it was in, and between, these hard layers (that had each once been the floor of the cave) that most of the remains of animals were found. There lay tumbled the bones and teeth of woolly rhinoceros, of reindeer, stag, Irish elk, mammoth, hyena, cave-bear, cave-lion, wolf, fox, and horse. Few of the bones were perfect, nearly all had been gnawed. The shoulder-blade of an Irish elk, for instance, was found high up on a ledge of rock. It showed the teeth-marks of some young animal, which (writes Mr H E Balch, who found it) 'had evidently seized it and jumped up out of the way of the others to enjoy its meal in peace'.

Gnawed
Bones

Professor Boyd Dawkins, who did most of the digging, came to the conclusion that practically all the animals had been dragged into the cave by hyenas, and that all these kinds of animal were living at this place at this time.

One very curious fact was noticed, that some of the largest, longest and strongest bones, particularly those of the gigantic cattle called Urus, had been broken sharp across. What beast could have been strong enough to do that? Professor Dawkins came to the conclusion that the hyenas and wolves that lived in the cave had learned the trick of driving the big beasts over the cliff. The heavy creatures, if not actually killed, would land with broken bones—helpless after the fall.

How were
the big
bones
broken?

Only a few years ago [writes Mr Balch] some dogs of the neighbourhood worried some goats on the hillside until at last they broke through the protecting fence at the cliff edge at the head of Wookey Hole, and were driven over it, two being killed outright, and the others being badly maimed

This seemed to confirm Professor Dawkins's theory of those mysterious broken bones. This is the sort of way that separate clues are brought together

In the Great Cave, which, though open, was undisturbed, a much more elaborate history was traced in the same sort of way. Its secrets had been guarded by 'The Witch of Wookey'

Fear of the Witch It is probable that for a great length of time the cavern was very little visited by the superstitious country folk

Until our recent work of excavation the roof was so low that it was necessary to stoop considerably on entering, and indeed where the visitor now passes walking upright under the great rock it was only possible for a little dog to walk beneath

Inside were layer upon layer of ash, bone, and broken bits of pottery. Weapons, both stone, bronze and iron, were found, and, near the top, Roman coins. There were bone pins, gaming boards, weaving combs, bronze brooches and tools

The perfect sickle and the point of another are of importance. They not only give us the form of this implement, but prove to us that our cave people, long before the Roman conquest, grew corn. To this evidence indeed can be added dropped grain found in the refuse on the floor of the cave. The little sickle was obviously meant to sever the heads of corn, probably as they were gathered in the hand, so that the straw was left standing

Imbedded in the ordinary floor material and among the food, human bones were persistently found, and they had obviously been thrown away with these at the same time. All must have laid mingled on the floor of the dwelling and have been equally gnawed by the domestic dogs of the cave

Well preserved pieces of one skull were found imbedded in the ash of the fire—one probably of a girl of 16 or 17, which appears to have been deliberately smashed. Near this specimen we found a silver ear-ring, though whether it had any connection with the skull it was impossible to say

Pottery found in Wookey Hole is often beautiful, but strangely enough some of the best is found lowest down, the art of ornamenting pottery having, it seems, died out or been neglected by the later people. There are strange gaps in the story of the caves and there were probably times when river silt or falls of rock made it impossible to get in or out.

IV

Wookey Hole was of course a rich find. But there have been even richer. On the walls of some caves in France and Spain, for instance, there were drawings, and statues built up out of the cave floor, of bison, elk, and reindeer. Even in England, where drawings are few, many interesting things have been discovered in other places—at Kent's Cavern in Devonshire, for instance, or at Grimes Graves, or at Paviland Cave in South Wales, where lay the bones of a warrior dyed brilliant red and an ivory bracelet made from a mammoth tusk.

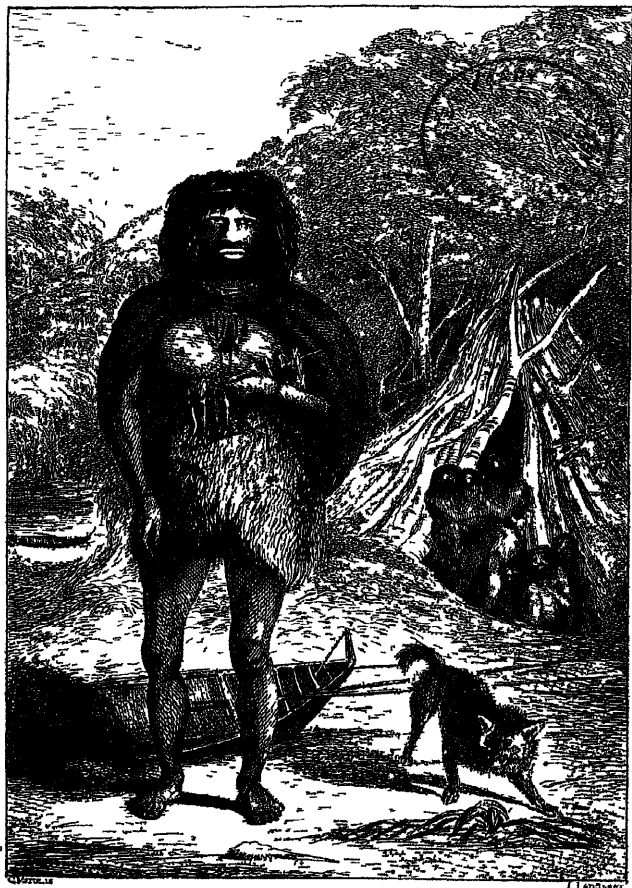
Just such work of digging and exploration is being done to-day in other parts of the world. Sometimes the search is for the hearths and rubbish heaps of a primitive tribe, sometimes it is for the tombs and palaces of ancient kings.

Once people had begun, with these clues, to piece the story of the Stone Age together it occurred to them that it was even possible in a certain sense to get witnesses.

If no one who could write or express himself had ever seen the men of either the Old or the New Stone Age in England, yet there were tribes living in other countries which, judging by the tools they used, must now be, or have been quite lately, very much like the people who once lived in Britain. Charles Darwin, in his voyage round the world in the *Beagle*, came across a primitive tribe of Fuegians. These people lived at the tip of South America where the weather is rather colder and wetter than that of England to-day. But his description would probably fit fairly well a coast tribe living here in one of

Drawings
in Caves

Could an
Eyewitness
be found?



FUEGIANS A HUNDRED YEARS AGO

the cold wet periods of the beginning of the New Stone Age

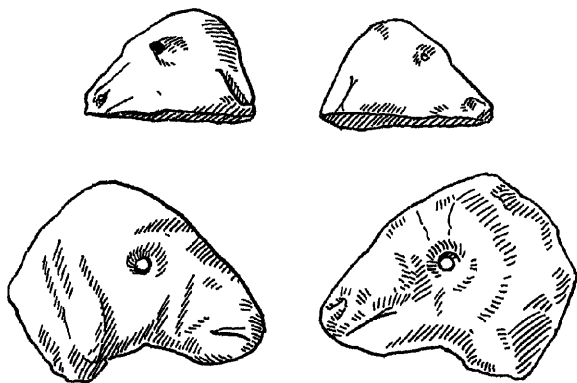
These poor wretches were stunted in their growth, their hideous faces bedaubed with white paint, their skins filthy and greasy, their hair entangled, their voices discordant, and their gestures violent. Viewing such men, one can hardly make oneself believe that they are fellow-creatures and inhabitants of the same world. People wonder sometimes what pleasure in life some of the lower animals can enjoy—the same question can be asked about these savages! Whenever it is low water, winter or summer, night or day, they must rise to pick shell-fish from the rocks, and women either dive to collect sea-eggs or sit patiently in their canoes, and with a baited hair-line, without any hook, jerk out little fish. If a seal is killed, or the floating carcass of a rotted whale discovered, it is a feast, and such miserable food is assisted by a few tasteless berries and fungi.

The Tasmanians too, when white men first saw them, went almost naked, daubing themselves with grease and ochre to keep off the rain and wearing a kangaroo skin in winter. They cut their hair a lock at a time, with two stones, one put underneath as a chopping block, one used as a chopper. Some Malay tribes of to-day do not even work their stones but just pick up any bit that will do.

V

Now though the first people who lived in Britain seem to have stuck for a very long time at this stage and been 'food gatherers' for several thousand years—that is for twice or three times as long as the whole of written history—yet they did slowly begin to make better tools.

Also, as can be seen from what was found at Wookey, they learned to tame other animals besides the dog, the only domestic animal of the Fuegians. Towards the middle of the Neolithic or New Stone Age they had also tamed goats, a very small kind of sheep with a brown fleece, and pigs, and they had small cattle which stood about 3½ feet at the shoulder. These tame beasts



NEOLITHIC SHEEP HEADS
(These are the actual size of the carved stones)

made life safer for man, so that fewer people starved or were killed for food in the winter

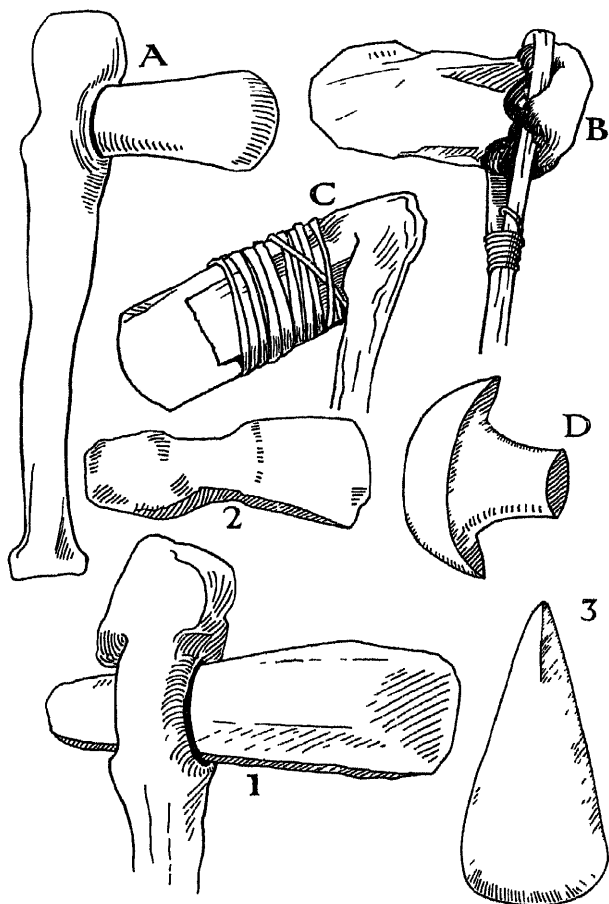
The next stage in our history—as in that of all civilized countries—was when the owners of these flocks and herds no longer wandered from place to place grazing their beasts, but began to grow food such as corn and barley, and later flax to make linen

Corn and
Flax

The new art of growing crops meant that they stayed most of the year in one place, only perhaps sending out one or two members of the family to find fresh pasture for the beasts. Carefully worked stone sickles have been found and the reader can imagine what hard work it must have been to harvest even a small field of corn with such tools. Their little grinding stones are also often found and used to be called 'fairy querns'.

No Cats!

They had no cats to guard their corn from mice and rats, but the dogs were fairly big animals that could protect the flocks from the many wolves. These first growers of corn have left many clues, so that we know a good deal about how they lived, for, though they still had to herd their beasts,



STONE AGE AXES

A, B, C, D, are from South America, Australia, and Solomon Islands, where the natives are still in the Stone Age

1, 2 and 3 are Pichistonic British 1 still has its original beechwood haft.

the new-fangled corn was a great standby, and mere keeping alive did not take up their whole time (as it does an animal's) Now they had time to do other things

The country in the New Stone Age changed in one important way, for it was probably at some time during this period that the land under what is now the North Sea and the English Channel slowly sank, and Britain became an island

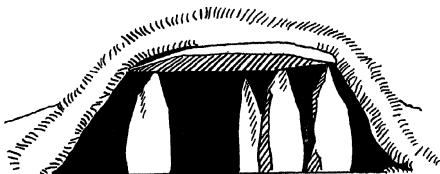
Most of the country was still covered with thick forest, and the New Stone Age people that we know of seem to have lived near the open chalk downs, and the 'ridge-ways'—the tops of these downs—were their highways

One of the new fashions, which was made possible by the fact that the New Stone Age people did not have to spend all their time hunting their food, was their custom of building 'circles' and 'avenues' of very large stone pillars, which were no doubt their temples, and also their custom of burying their dead in mounds which we call 'barrows' Some of these circles—particularly Stonehenge in Wiltshire—are most impressive, one of the strangest things about Stonehenge itself being that some of the stones must have come from as far away as Pembrokeshire.

The 'barrows' were believed (in the days when the Old Stone Age hammers were thought to be the work of pixies) to be the burial-place of giants, and a very old Cornish fairy story (which was handed on by word of mouth till eighty years ago) gives a description of the building of a barrow Much finer, bigger ones were often built, of course, when a whole tribe worked to bury some chief But this sounds a pretty good account of how a simple one was made

'Young Tom', in the story, is a sort of 'Jack the Giant-Killer', has been having a fight with Giant Denbras, and has accidentally wounded him to death

"Take me a little higher up to the top of the hill," says Denbras faintly So when they had slowly got him up there,



HOW A BARROW WAS COVER'D WITH EARTH
(AT PINTU IVAN, WALES)

the giant sat down on his favourite stone seat that had a flat rock behind it "Bury me decent", he says to Tom, "in a barrow, after the fashion of the old people of the land Here are the stones ready to be raised round me and the big quoit stone to cap the whole" And so the giant died When he saw that it was all over, Tom raised up the flat stones all round old Denbras as he sat, placed the giant's stiffening hands on his knees, and settled him as decently as he could

The next day Tom and his wife Joan came back, and when they had found the club and sling with which the old fellow used to kill his game, they went to the top of the hill and laid them on his knee Joan picked flowers and branches of oak and laid them all round Giant Denbras, and, working with a will, they had soon collected enough stones to raise the barrow even with the tops of the uprights which enclosed him Then (maybe it was with the help of poles, but anyway by some trick only known to the folk of that day) they placed the huge quoit or cap-stone over the head of Denbras and so hid him for ever from the light of day Before the sun had sunk behind the hill-tops they had raised as noble a barrow over that giant as any to be found on Towednack Hills

Strangely enough this old story goes on to describe the next two stages in the history of civilization Only it gaily makes things that may have taken five thousand years—and cannot well have taken less than three—all happen in one family For Tom in the story, like old Giant Denbras, is still a Stone Age man Tom has never even used a bow and arrows, but only a sling and a stone, and he does not understand the use of metal But when Tom and his wife Joan have set up comfortably in the place of old Giant Denbras, and Tom has walled in the estate, somebody new (who in the story is called Jack-the-Tinkard or Jack-the-Hammer) comes thundering at his door This young fellow has red hair and a bag of strange tools on his back

Metal Tools And this is more or less what really did happen in this country For the next great discovery in the story of this, as of all other civilizations, was the discovery of the use of metal

This old fairy tale seems to be a real, if muddled and potted history For it was probably not the men of the

ridgeways, not the workers in flint, who learned to smelt tin and to mix it with copper and make bronze of it, but red-haired Gaels and Celts and Brithones who, since this country was now an island, must have come over the sea in skin and log boats. These were the people who later, along with the older race to whom they had taught their art, came to be called the Ancient Britons, and later still the Welsh. These were the people who, more than two thousand years later, fought against Julius Caesar.

POINTS TO NOTICE IN CHAPTER I

1 The people of the Old Stone Age walked to Britain which was not then an island

2 There were no more gigantic lizards by that time, but there were the woolly rhinoceros, the hyena and the cave-bear, and many other creatures which hunted man

3 There is proof that Old Stone Age Man used fire. Charred and gnawed bones have been found

4 Our great-great-grandfathers could not understand the clues to the story because they believed in fairies, goblins, giants and all sorts of magic creatures who (they thought) chipped flints or made burial-mounds

5 The discovery in science that helped to make sense of the clues was the discovery of stratification of the earth. Remember—lowest—oldest

6 Old Stone Age Man was first a food-gatherer and later a hunter, but at some time or other New Stone Age Man began to tame beasts, first hunting-dogs and then animals for meat and milk. Later he began to grow little patches of such crops as barley, wheat, oats, peas and beans

7 There are still tribes living in many parts of the world who live in very much the way that Stone Age Men lived here

8 It is unlikely that the men of the Old Stone Age made Stonehenge and the bigger burial mounds because getting enough to eat must have taken all their time

9 Some of the oldest fairy stories tell, in a confused sort of way, the story of how new tools and new ways of doing things came into use

10 Old Stone Age Man cooked his food and chipped flints. New Stone Age Man lived by growing crops as well as by hunting and fishing, and kept tame herds. He had skin and earthenware bags and jars for storing food in winter. A very rough kind of spinning and weaving began

CHAPTER 2

NEW TRIBES AND NEW TOOLS

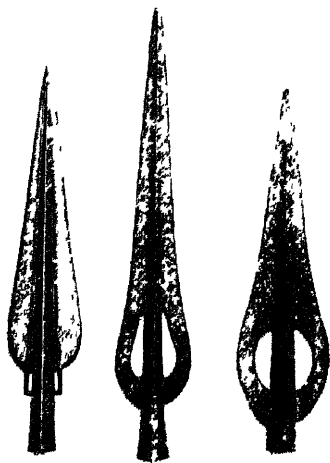
THE people who came over the sea in coracles and log boats, knew, as we have said, a great many things that the New Stone Age people of Britain did not know. The most important of the new things they could do was to make bronze, for bronze axes would cut down trees and make clearings in the forest much better than stone axes, arrows and spears with bronze heads were lighter and flew straighter than those with stone heads, and it was easier to harvest with a bronze than with a stone sickle. These new-comers could make swords and fine brooches too, and, after a while, there was seen here that most important tool of all—a bronze ploughshare, the tool that lessened the work of growing food more perhaps than any other single invention.

One special thing about the Bronze Age tools and weapons is that they are very often found in 'hoards', so that it seems likely that they were made by regular smiths who either exchanged them at the smithy for what they needed to live on (say corn and skins and meat) or else perhaps, when they had made enough, they travelled about with them like pedlars. Perhaps (as bronze things must have been heavy to carry) these pedlar-smiths buried spare stock till they had sold or bartered the first lot. These hoards are found in many parts of the country.

Not only swords, spears, (see picture) and knives were made out of bronze, but also the razors with which men

shaved off their beards. Bronze can never, of course, be made as sharp as steel, but on the other hand it never rusts, and after lying for hundreds of years in the damp earth it comes out as perfect as when it was lost or buried, only having turned a beautiful pale green.

One particularly well ornamented dagger was found at



BRONZE SPEAR-HEADS
FROM IRELAND AND LONDON

the bottom of the River Thames. Its blade was cunningly bevelled and ribbed and it had a scroll pattern both on blade and handle.

The remains of leather and wooden scabbards with the bronze tips still good have also been found, and shields with gold bosses on them.

The Bronze Age people yoked oxen to their ploughs, ploughing and now much more ground could be prepared for crops, with oxen than in the days when every bit had to be dug by hand. Wheat and barley were still the main crops, but peas,

beans and oats were probably also grown. Cooking was very often done on open fires outside the huts, but early in the Bronze Age the pottery was not good enough to stand the fire, so food was often boiled in a sort of bag made of hide when it was not roasted over the fire. Water or milk could be put into earthenware bowls, and stones heated in the fire could then be thrown in to heat it. Towards the end of the Bronze Age there were a few metal cauldrons for boiling, but these were rare and precious.

People belonging to a number of different tribes seem to have come over to Britain at different times during the many centuries of the Bronze Age. There were, as has been said, Celts, Gaels, and later Brithones, and later still Belgae from Northern France, and they settled mostly round the south and east coasts of this country. Unlike some new-comers who sailed over later, the Celts and others are thought not to have driven out the New Stone Age people, but to have settled among them and partly civilized them, so that round the coast there were people living who were mixed in race—some with long heads and fair or red hair like their Celtic ancestors, and some who were shorter and darker and with round heads who were more like the older races.

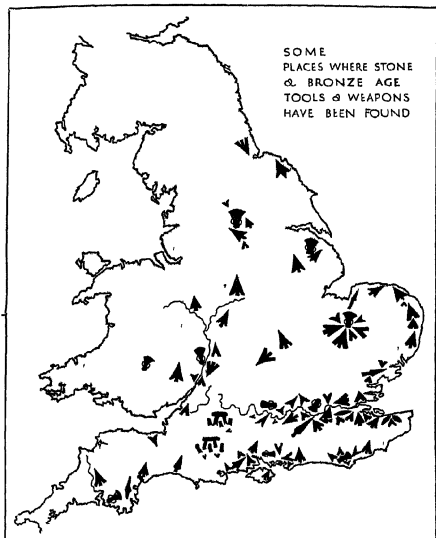
Like the Stone Age people, the new-comers buried their dead in barrows. At one time it was the fashion, or the religion, to burn the bodies and collect the bones into jars and at other times they buried their chiefs very much as Giant Denbras was buried in the fairy tale. Some tribes lived in round stone and earth huts partly dug into the earth, and some, who may possibly have been men of yet another race, lived in lake and swamp villages, the remains of which can be seen to this day. These tribes built their houses on wooden piles driven through the water of the lake where it was shallow, or into the mud of the swamps.

Round Huts

Lake

Dwellings

Now it may seem odd, in an almost empty country, to choose to live in the middle of a lake or a swamp, but we know (because we can see the remains of the huts



Readers who can think of other places in which such things have been found should add to the "finds" on this map

and of the tools and pottery they used) that some tribes certainly did this ! Probably the explanation is that there was a good deal of fighting always going on, and if a particular tribe were clever with boats and another tribe were not, then a village built out in a lake would be a safe place for the boat-using people. One sort of place the Bronze, like the Stone Age people avoided. They did not like wet oak forests such as covered the Weald of Sussex and much of the middle of England. Dark and tangled, these were still the homes of bears and wolves. To man they were 'bad lands'. It is in the south and east parts of England that the best Bronze Age things appear to have been made earliest, so this part of the country must have become more or less civilized first. One reason for this was no doubt because here the country was drier, more fertile and less hilly, and again (and perhaps more important still) because it was nearest to the rest of Europe, where, as will be shown presently, things changed much more quickly than they did in Britain.

'Bad
Lands'

But even in Britain, though the business took a long time, things were learnt, so that towards the end of the Bronze Age and the beginning of the Iron Age the Britons of the south and east were very different from the men of the New Stone Age.

Fairy tale
Gold

Probably the oldest of our old ballads and fairy tales give a fairly good idea of what the country was like and even of how it was governed at this time. Of course a good many things have got altered in so many tellings. In a fairy tale a chief is called a king, his son a prince, a less powerful chief is called a knight, and a sacred grove or a stone circle a church. But there are bits in such stories as those about fairy ladies who appeared from the middle of lakes, 'The Giants of Towednack', some of the oldest of the King Arthur tales, as well as in some of the oldest ballads, that seem as if they go back to these days. Merlin, the great Enchanter of King Arthur's court, may well have been a Druid (who were the priests,

Tales as
Evidence

prophets and judges of Bionze Age England) Green Hills where strange things were believed to happen, as in the tale of 'Kate Crackernuts' and 'Childe Rowland,' were either barrows or places where uncivilized Stone Age people still lived on. Altogether the fairy-tale world was not unlike the Britain of that time.

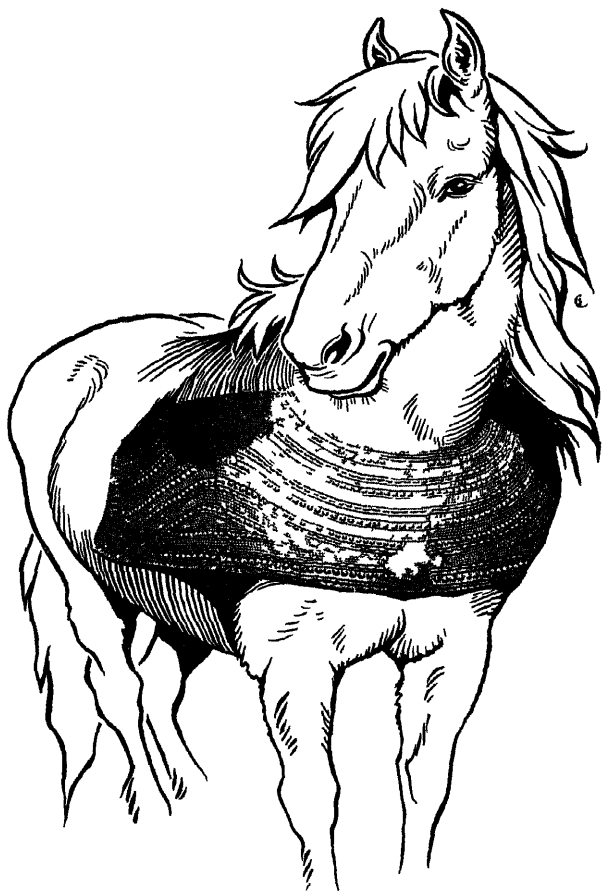
In Ireland and Wales magnificent gold ornaments, just such as an elf-king might have worn, have been found. In the British Museum you may see a glittering piece of gold which was a breastplate for a pony (see page 24). The gold is mounted on leather and beautifully worked and tooled. It lay with a man's bones in a stone barrow which had been covered with two or three hundred cart-loads of pebbles. The cairn formed by the pebbles was called 'Bryn-yr-Ellyllon'. This means in Welsh, 'Hill of the Fairies' or Goblins. The breastplate would fit a pony the usual size of present-day Welsh hill ponies. It seems likely that before a prince or a warrior would decorate his horse with gold, he must himself have had on all the gold that he could wear, so that we can imagine that such a man really rode shining and glittering as the fairy tales say, for gold collars, bracelets, crowns and helmets have all been found.

Some of the most beautiful gold ornaments were found in Ireland, whose warriors must often have been particularly magnificent. In Scotland, too, there was much gold and bronze. A beautiful jet necklace was found at Melfort, Argyllshire, and Whitby in Yorkshire was the port from which jet was later shipped off to Gaul (France).

But now something new comes into the history of Britain, something that was to alter the story very much indeed.

Mediterranean
People

Let us go back for a moment to the old story of *The Giants of Towednack*. The reader will remember that the story tells how Tom (Stone Age) buried old Giant Denbras in the barrow, and that, when he had set up house in the giant's place, a new young man with red



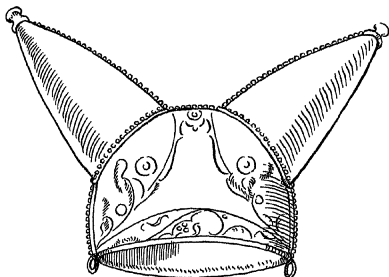
GOLD BREASTPLATE FOR A PONY

It would, of course, be mounted on leather harness, but only the broken goldwork now remains

hair, Jack the Tinkard (Bronze and Early Iron Age), came with a bag of strange tools on his back, and taught Tom many things

Giants of
Towednack
again

The story goes on to tell how Jack and Tom together began to explore the caves and store places where the giant had lived, and that they found marvellous treasures. There were strings of amber beads, beautiful crystals flowered with blue, red, green and purple, plates of gold and silver shaped like half-moons, and pearls. There



A BRONZE HELMET FOUND IN THE THAMIS AND NOW IN
THE BRITISH MUSEUM

were other things too, such as harps of different sizes, and many useful tools. Now these were all things that had been made in a far land and by people who knew many arts that were not known in Britain. They were things that had been made in fact by some tribe or nation that was far ahead of the people of Britain.

If the next part of this history is to be understood, we must try to make up our minds who these people were, where they came from, and why they came to Britain.

But (as usual so far) a good deal will have to be guess-work and putting two and two together

POINTS TO NOTICE IN CHAPTER 2

1 Towards the end of the New Stone Age more people came over to England. By this time England was an island and they came in boats made of hides like the coracles still used in South Wales, or in hollowed-out tree trunks like the canoes still used in the South Sea Islands.

2 These people are generally called Men of the Bronze and Early Iron Age, because, instead of using stone tools, they had learnt how to smelt and forge bronze, which is a mixture of copper and tin. No one knows when the first iron came, but it was rare at first and considered magical.

3 These people made houses of which the remains have been found. Sometimes these were round huts partly dug into the ground and thatched with anything that came handy, sometimes they were built on piles in the middle of lakes and marshes.

4 Bronze objects are very often found in 'hoards', which makes it seem likely that each man did not make his own tools and weapons, but that they were made by regular smiths.

5 Beautifully made gold and jet ornaments were found that date from this time, and, dating from the same time, were found things that seem to have come from far away.

6 Bronze Age Man grew more crops than Stone Age Man and the wheel and plough began to be used in Britain.

CHAPTER 3

THE FIRST CIVILIZED PEOPLES

If you will bear in mind the fact that everybody has to eat in order to live, you will not be surprised to hear that it seems to have been in the fertile valleys of the Euphrates and Tigris, and in Egypt, that man first learned to weave, to write, to shape building stone, to build ships instead of canoes, and to smelt and work metals

The people who seem first to have become what we may call civilized—and who were the first who lived in towns—were the Sumerians and the Egyptians. Both these people lived in warm and fertile river valleys. 'There is always corn in Egypt,' said Joseph's father to the elder brothers when the Israelites and their flocks and herds were starving. He was right. There was corn, Sumerians and there had been corn, and because of corn, civilization in Egypt for five or six thousand years. Egypt, and the Euphrates and Tigris valleys, were countries where grain could be grown with only a moderate amount of work, and therefore the Sumerians and the Egyptians had time and strength left over from the daily struggle of getting enough to eat to invent all sorts of new arts and new ways of doing things. Further East still, in India and Persia, these new arts were soon practised, new crops grew, cities were built, wise men measured time by the stars, life became more regular and less hard. If traces of a civilization yet older than those of Egypt and Sumeria are found—as they may be—they will certainly be dis-

covered in some place that is, or was then, warm and fertile

Sumerians When we first find out about the Sumerians (once more by the method of the tracker and the detective) they are in the Stone Age, just as the inhabitants of Britain were, but, because living was easier, they learned more quickly and their civilization began to spread to other places, first to countries where it was easiest to get food, and then, when agriculture (ways of growing grain and keeping food-animals) had become better, people could keep up a civilized life in places that were not so warm, or where the soil was not quite so good. One of the places to which civilization soon spread was Egypt

Egyptians About 4,000 years before the birth of Christ, the Egyptians were just passing out of the New Stone and into the Bronze Age. But in the next four hundred years they got on very fast. The dry climate of Egypt has kept their tombs and temples and records for us so that we know more about them than about the earlier Sumerians. For this reason it seems convenient to take the Egyptian civilization as an instance. These Egyptians were great builders, fine potters and magnificent sculptors and metal-workers. They knew a good deal

Writing about chemistry. They learned to make something like a fine paper to write on and they wove delicate linen for their clothes. They made calendars, and divided the

Time day and the night into hours, they made water-clocks and sundials, ploughs and water-wheels, and grew rich

Corn and Cattle in corn and cattle. They had to defend their riches against more primitive wandering people—both hunters and herdsmen—people who like Abraham and Isaac wandered from place to place to graze their animals.

Out of this need for defence and the need to divide out the best land, grew up a regular government with kings who led out their armies.

Magic Now most hunting peoples, tribes who depend for a living on crops that they have grown, and most who

depend on flocks and herds—all peoples who have passed out of the stage of being 'food gatherers'—sooner or later begin to have, besides some kind of government, ideas of magic and later of religion. They believe, for instance, that they can make rain or fine weather, or make the rivers flood to water their corn. They generally do this by setting the weather or the crops a good example in some way, or by giving presents to the river (If you want the corn to have long stalks a woman, with her long hair flowing, walks over the field as the corn begins to sprout.) But the important job of weather-making is usually done by a king or chief who represents the tribe or nation.

Sooner or later, each king or chief who has been successful in war, and in whose lifetime the weather or the river has given the tribe good crops, dies. Then people begin to wonder what has happened to the life that was in this mighty rain-maker who was so strong? They wonder if somehow his life, or his breath, or his soul, couldn't be made to go on helping them, or anyhow stopped from doing them harm? For death is change, and if he did them good before, why then, unless they can stop him or get round him, after death (which is change) he may very likely do them harm.

In some way such as this, each people, when they have got past the food-gathering stage, nearly always begin to believe in some sort of magic, then in good and evil, and finally in some sort of religion. In Bronze Age Britain the Druids were the priests and made sacrifices and magic to help the crops and to make their tribe successful in war. The 'good' dead they buried in barrows. It would be interesting to know more about these Druids. It is to be hoped that 'detectives' soon get on their tracks.

In Egypt people came to believe that burial was most important. The breaths or souls of their king-priests (and later of all their great people and nobles) would be safe, and still able to work good magic for them, if they preserved their bodies.

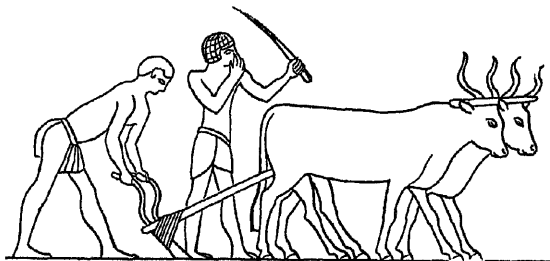
Magic 'sets
a good
example'

When the
powerful
Weather-
maker dies

Good and
Evil

Egypt The Egyptians, who were mighty in all that they did, built the most enormous tombs that man has ever built, to preserve the bodies of their king-priests. These were the great Pyramids, and they built besides huge temples to their gods—spring, harvest, river and animal Gods. When to-day, people think and talk of Egyptian civilization, it is as a rule of the tombs and temples that they are thinking. For these things were built to last, but the corn and the cattle, the work and the riches that made these things possible were used, eaten, and planted,

Palaces and
Tombs



WOODEN PLOUGH USED IN ANCIENT EGYPT

Very similar kinds are still in use. Compare with page 76

and have gone. Only the solemn things—tombs and temples, and the palaces of the kings and the writings of the priests—remain.

But if we want to picture the life of ancient Egypt we must once again remember that every man must eat to live, so that every priest, warrior, noble and learned man, craftsman and king, all the people that had other business than growing corn or minding cattle or carrying goods by water or on the backs of donkeys, had to be provided for—fed by some one (who in their turn had to be fed). Then we can imagine what acres upon acres of fertile fields, what great flocks, what throngs of people, peasants, miners, smiths, craftsmen, merchants, bankers, lawyers, must have gone to the making of the wonderful cities, palaces and temples that we can see

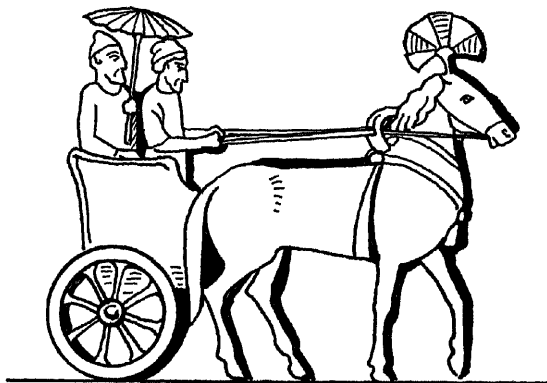
Fertile
Fields
Craftsmen

How does all this come into a history of England? It comes in very practically, and indeed Egypt is only the first of many distant lands and strange peoples about which we shall have to find out at least something, before we can understand things that happened in our own corner of the world

II

Now all the things that the Sumerians and the Egyptians needed in their new way of living, and for their great cities, were not to be found in their own countries, and

Spread of
Mediterranean
Civilization



PHOENICIAN CHARIOT (FROM CYPRUS)

gradually, in the course of more than a thousand years, through their going out of their own countries to get what they wanted (these things were chiefly metals), civilization began to spread all round the coasts of the Mediterranean Sea, and other civilizations further east in Persia and India began to spring up. Gradually, as one after another each of the Mediterranean tribes began to learn the new arts, they each started on their own speciality. Some of the coast tribes, those called

the Phoenicians, Cretans and Phrygians, for instance, were great sailors, some of the Greeks were great thinkers, poets and scientists

It is with the Phoenicians and Carthaginians (who were less good builders and craftsmen but better sailors than the Egyptians) that we first come upon anything that we can call a piece of written history of Britain, and to the time when we can first use anything like a date, and get our time right, not within a thousand, but within a hundred years

First Date
500 B C

Himilco, a Carthaginian explorer, sailed (in a ship rather like that on page 35) round the west coast of Europe as far as Britain and Ireland. He made his voyage about 500 years before the birth of Christ. But unfortunately he is just a date and nothing more. He says hardly anything of the people or the countries he saw. Since there may have been nearly as much difference between an educated Carthaginian and a Briton of that time as between Captain Cook and a Maori, he no doubt thought these people savages.

Greeks For the Greeks were in many ways even more civilized than the Egyptians. Their temples were plainer and smaller, but their poetry and their plays and their philosophy were a great deal better. Some people think that they were the best in the world either before or since. We shall hear a good deal more about the Greeks later, especially (when we come to the time when science began in England) we shall hear about Hippocrates, who was a great Greek physician, and about a very famous Greek named Aristotle.

Aristotle Aristotle was not only a great collector of all that was already known about the world in his day, but also himself found out more about every scientific subject about which he wrote (except perhaps physics and astronomy, where he unfortunately repeated some of the mistakes of other scientists).

Collected
all that was
known

But almost more important than his actual discoveries, or than the fact that he collected such a vast amount of

knowledge on such a number of subjects, was the fact that Aristotle first understood, and then explained in his books, the way in which more discoveries could be made. For instance, when he was studying animals he did not just write down what other people said about them, but watched and looked at them himself, both when they were alive and when they were dead. He lists five hundred different animals and birds, and of fifty he gives accurate drawings. He described in detail the development day by day of a hen's egg into a chicken, saw how the heart formed, and saw how it began to beat while the chicken was still in the egg. What was most important about Aristotle and the Greek scientists was that instead of guessing or making magic, they tried really to find out. Experiment

About a hundred years later than Himilco, in the time of Alexander the Great (the Greek who conquered part of India), and of this great philosopher and scientist Aristotle, a Greek from Marseilles, called Pithias, explored Britain and got as far as the North of Scotland and the Baltic. He spoke about islands which he called the Cassiterides and said that these lands were rich in tin and lead.

More than two hundred years after that, another Greek, 300 B C called Posidonius, came. He wrote in his account of his voyage that the inhabitants of 'Belerion' are very fond of strangers, and are civilized in consequence. He said that after smelting and purifying their tin they beat it into lumps shaped like knuckle bones and carry it to an island, called Ictus, which lies off the coast. He said that they do this at low tide, taking it across in wagons, and that on Ictus the merchants buy the metal from the natives and carry it over to Gaul. Cornish Tin Trade

Now Belerion is certainly the Land's End in Cornwall, and Ictus almost certainly St Michael's Mount. When Posidonius wrote, the tin trade in Cornwall had been going on for three or four hundred years. Probably Phrygians had been trading there for 700 or 800 years.

before this time, but either they did not write about it or what they wrote was lost. A great deal of tin and lead was mined in Cornwall, and a good deal of corn was grown all round the south coasts, and here and there regular coined money was being used. Naturally the families and tribes nearest the coast seem to have been the most civilized and most like their neighbours in Gaul. They certainly carried on a trade in wheat, cattle, gold, silver, iron, skins, slaves and hunting dogs, and got in return all kinds of worked things such as are described in the fairy tale, of these we have found only the things that last best, such as ivory bracelets, necklaces of amber beads, and cups and jugs made of glass.

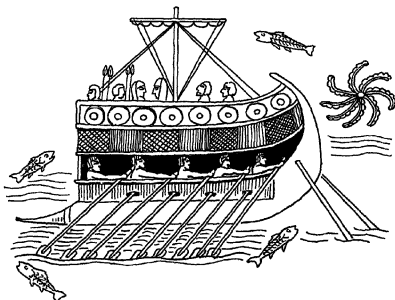
Wild Tribes
Inland

But inland in Britain there were still people who sowed little or no corn, but hunted and kept flocks and herds and lived chiefly on milk and meat. They were still practically Stone Age people, used skins of animals for clothing and wore their hair long, and it was they who used the famous woad and stained their bodies bright blue to frighten their enemies.

III

Romans

The trade with the Greeks and Phoenicians went on for a very long time, but presently a new race of men began to come to Britain to trade. These were the Romans, who, from their chief city in Italy, had begun to get the mastery of all the other peoples who lived near them—both civilized and uncivilized. Just as the Greeks became the best philosophers, scientists and poets of all the peoples who lived round the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, so the Romans, in their turn, became the chief conquerors and law-givers. Beginning like the Greeks by being a small tribe who lived in their own city, they gradually set out first as traders, then as conquerors, and in a surprisingly short time they had conquered all the old civilized cities and countries, except those that lay very far to the East—such as India. They were masters of Egypt, Carthage,



PHOENICIAN WAR SHIP

All early artists represent ships as much shorter than they really were. The fishes and starfish are to suggest the sea. The shields are shown as in the Viking ship (page 78).

Greece, Babylon and Judea, and, at the time we have now reached, they had begun their conquest of the barbarian countries as well, marching their armies against the Gauls who lived in France, and the German tribes who lived to the north. 60 B C

It seems difficult, since they lived so long ago, to realize how civilized these Romans were. But it would hardly be too much to say that it is only in the last 200 years that we have caught the Romans up. If you study even a small Roman city you will find that it had a market-place with shops, steam baths (better than most of our public baths to-day), that the houses of the richer people had central heating and glass windows, that they used a kind of concrete better than we can make now, and that, besides the market-place and the wine-shops, there were banks, lawyers' offices, and a great temple with tall columns and as big as any church to-day, and always

a fine games stadium Their farming methods, too, were very good indeed, they knew how to drain boggy land, they planted orchards, and grew many kinds of crops

IV

Some
Causes of
War

It is, of course, natural that a poor war-like tribe should try to sack a rich city, for it is much simpler and quicker to steal cattle and corn than to grow them, but this was not exactly the reason why the Romans conquered Gaul, and later on, Britain For it was the Romans who were civilized and the Gauls and Britons who were barbarians

Roman
Demands

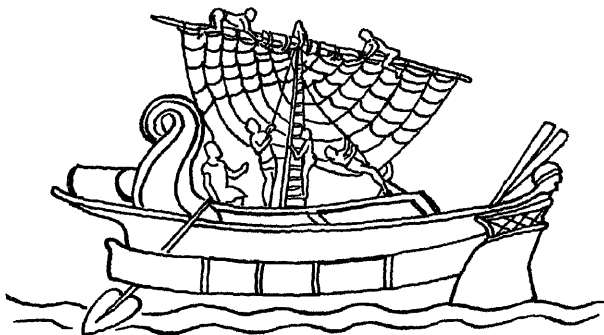
But if you try and imagine how things must have been in those days, it is not difficult to see why the Roman armies marched out and conquered other peoples The Romans, unlike the Egyptians, had no very rich fertile land of their own Though they knew very well how farming ought to be done, they generally lived in cities and were traders They were great soldiers too, and when they conquered a country they did three things as a rule They made the conquered country pay them tribute They taught the barbarians better ways of governing, farming and making things (in order chiefly, of course, to get more tribute out of them), and they protected their own merchants from bandits and prowling "outer barbarians"

Wild
Britons

For nearly 100 years before they conquered Britain, Roman merchants had been backwards and forwards trading with the British tribes The people with whom all the many civilized strangers from the Mediterranean traded were British tribes who lived round the coast, and, since this trade had been going on with the Romans for at least three generations, many of the coast Britons could speak Latin and had learnt Roman ways But these civilized tribes were not the only Britons Inland were wild forests, hills and bogs Here, as before, still lived real barbarians who painted themselves blue and

none of whom could read and write, and who, though they knew how to grow corn, preferred to live by stealing what they wanted, and by making war on the more civilized tribes

Now sometimes, as we shall see later on, the Romans had a very definite way of dealing with this sort of disturbance to their trade. They built fortifications and



ROMAN MERCHANT SHIP

The mainsail is hauled up with ropes passing through a series of rings

walls to keep the barbarians out. But it was not always possible to do this. In Britain, for instance, it so happened that the best metal mines were not conveniently arranged all round the coast. Indeed, some of the most important of them were just in the most barbarous places—the lead mines of Derbyshire and the gold mines of Wales, for example.

POINTS TO NOTICE IN CHAPTER 3

- 1 Civilization begins in places where getting a living is not too difficult, but where there is time over from getting food and shelter, for learning new ways of doing things
- 2 The civilized peoples who first came to Britain were people who had learnt their civilization from the Egyptians

3 The peoples of Egypt and Sumeria went through the Old and New Stone Ages just as we did, but learnt more quickly

4 People, when they get out of the stage of living by food-gathering and become hunters or herdsmen, and later when they live on the crops that they have grown, always seem to begin to believe in some sort of magic This belief in magic generally develops into some form of religion

5 The Egyptians were great builders, and while we were still living in huts, magnificent palaces and cities were being built in Egypt

6 When civilization spread all round the shores of the Mediterranean Sea the Phoenicians and Carthaginians were the people who became the best sailors The Greeks were the best artists, thinkers and scientists, and the Romans the best organizers, lawgivers, and road-makers

7 Greeks, Phoenicians and Carthaginians all sailed to Britain This is known because things that were made in these countries during our Bronze Age have been found in Britain, and because Greeks who came wrote an account of their voyages

8 Sumerians, Egyptians, Carthaginians, Phoenicians, Greeks and Romans all left written records, and the Greeks made the first summaries of scientific knowledge That is to say, they wrote down everything that had been discovered by them or other people about such things as the stars, taking measurements, weighing and counting, and the habits and growth of plants and animals

PART TWO

CHAPTER 4

THE ROMANS INVADE BRITAIN

It was a Roman named Julius Caesar, one of the greatest Caesar in
of many great Roman generals, who set out to conquer Gaul
the barbarians of Gaul, the country we know as France
As the Romans always did when they conquered a new
country, Caesar pushed roads straight across the land,
and built camps from which the roads could be guarded
and the tribute collected After that, as in any country
that had been conquered by the armies of Rome, mer-
chants were no longer raided or robbed, or stuck in
bogs, or on the wrong side of flooded rivers for lack of
roads or bridges Caesar divided the country into three
parts, each under a Roman governor

So much for Gaul

But no doubt tribute could also be collected in Britain,
and since Caesar was about it—since he was in Gaul
at the head of his army—why not conquer Britain as
well? For one thing, beaten Gaulish chiefs were always
taking refuge there and then appearing again For
another thing, the Druids priests, who were a great
bother to the Romans in Gaul, had their headquarters
in Britain So Caesar marched on, up to the north
coast of Gaul, and prepared his ships

Thus it was that, fifty-five years before the birth of
Christ, the British tribes, who were well used to Roman
merchants, first saw a Roman army on their shores.

Six in the Afternoon The Roman army landed here about six o'clock in the afternoon of August 26th, and Caesar himself wrote very briefly the story of his invasion. He had with him, besides auxiliaries, two legions or regiments—in all about 10,000 men. One was the 7th, and the other



JULIUS CAESAR

was the most famous in his army—the 10th Legion. They came in eighty large sailing vessels, and he had besides some fast galleys. He sailed from Boulogne when the tide served about midnight, reached Dover in the morning, found the tide high, waited till it turned and then landed somewhere near Deal, about six o'clock in the evening.

Caesar lands at Deal

But though the Roman traders and the Latin speech and dress might have been in fashion in Britain, an army was another affair. Most of the Britons in the neighbourhood resisted Caesar's landing. They came down in their chariots, armed with spears, and fought the Romans. But Caesar landed all the same, and built a camp. The Britons, however, went on harrying his two legions, and the worst of it was that, a storm coming on, the ships which were to have brought his horsemen had to put back.

The sailors who manned Caesar's ships, too, made a mistake. There being a full moon and a spring tide, the ships which had been grounded (for easier landing for his soldiers) were caught, badly anchored, by the rising tide, and several were dashed against each other, and lost. The end of the business was that after three weeks, Caesar came to the conclusion that the conquest of Britain was not worth while, and, in such ships as were left to him, he went back to Gaul.

Next year Caesar landed again, this time with horse- 54 B.C. men, crossed the Thames, got at least one British tribe to fight on his side, and made at least one of the British chieftains (Cassivelaunus), who had resisted him, sue for peace. After two months, Caesar again sailed back to Gaul.

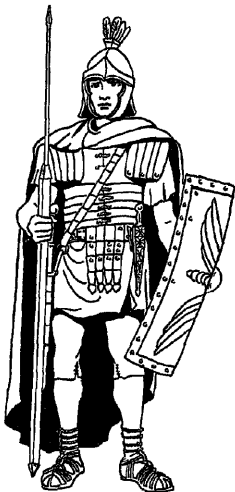
Now it has been suggested that the Romans came to Britain partly because they wanted to protect their trade. Some historians say nothing about this side of it and declare that it was for the sake of glory, and in order to explore, that the Romans took their armies so far from home, but, in fact, trade and glory often go



CAPTURED GAUL

Trade or
Glory?

together, as we shall find over and over again in the course of this story



The Roman
Armies leave
Britain

ROMAN FOOT SOLDIER
The armour was usually
bronze mounted on leather

Anyhow, glory was what Caesar got when he marched back to Rome. The city ordered a general thanksgiving of twenty days in his honour, 'Because,' said the Senate (the council of nobles), 'he has carried the Roman Standard into a hitherto unconquered land.' The Senate was wise to encourage Roman generals in this way. For after all, what was it but trade and tribute that made possible the glory and civilization of a city State? Rome had no rich land like Egypt. Her corn must grow under distant skies, and her gold and metals come from far away.

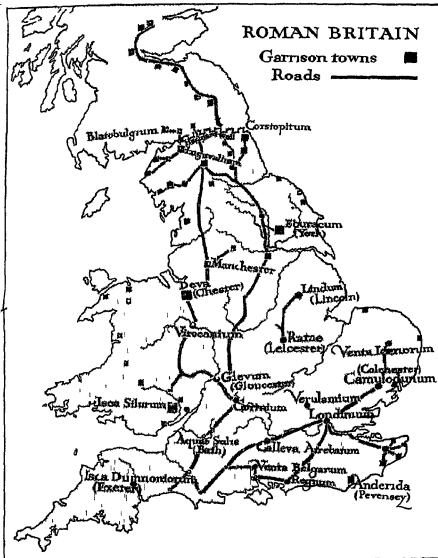
But Britain was after all not very important to the people who had already conquered

such rich countries as Egypt, Spain and Gaul. For more than eighty years after Caesar's second landing other things kept the legions busy.

II

Birth of
Christ

It was during this period (which lasted nearly 100 years) that an event happened in another Roman province, which passed almost unnoticed except by 'certain poor shepherds' and Three Wise Men. This province was not inhabited by people who had been civilized by the Romans, but by a race who had known the arts of city life for much longer than the Romans themselves, and



More Roman Roads are found each year by archeologists so that this map is not complete Also—in Wales for instance—the Romans often paved and improved mountain tracks and made them fit for pack horses

who looked upon the Romans as barbarians The place Judea was the Roman Province of Judea, the event was the



ROMAN PORTRAIT OF A 'WILD BRITON'

birth of Christ There is no need to say here how important this event turned out to be, or how, later, the Christian religion brought Britain in touch with civilizations even older than that of the Romans For all through this history we shall hear of it, and each one of the readers of this book probably knows the

story better than he knows the story of his own country

AD 43 But to return to Britain Forty-three years after the birth of Christ (from which we now date our years) the Emperor Claudius was master of Rome, and Rome was more powerful than ever Claudius determined to add Britain to the Roman Empire and sent generals with an army of about 40,000 men to conquer it As before, some of the Britons sided with the Romans and some against This time the Roman generals were opposed by a chief named Caractacus He ruled all the tribes in South Wales, and it was a long time before he was beaten in battle, and carried off a prisoner to Rome After a few victories had been won by the Romans, the Emperor Claudius did two things which seem very

Britain
Conquered

surprising, but which help to make a modern reader understand what sort of people the Romans were. The first thing was this. Claudius himself came all the way to Britain with a fresh lot of reinforcements and stayed only a fortnight. For this to have been possible means that the Romans had made roads and bridges and inns all the way across Europe, besides having seaworthy ships and good ports. The second was that, when he got back to Rome, Claudius thought he would celebrate the Roman victories over the Britons in a very special way and by a very special spectacle. This is what he arranged. On the first day there was a triumphal procession with a display of British chariots, weapons, drinking cups and British prisoners.

Then, in a big open drill ground on the outskirts of the city, called the Field of Mars, he had an imitation native British town built. It was supposed to represent Colchester, which was the capital of one of the kingdoms of Britain. No doubt the town that Claudius had built had round huts of timber and thatch and a stockade round it, and probably the stockade was decorated with models of human heads, for this (so the Romans said) was what the Britons did, only they used real heads. This sham town was now 'manned' by prisoners of war, tribesmen caught in Britain.



ROMAN PORTRAIT OF A
'CIVILIZED ROMAN'

A Curious
Show

Standing apart upon a platform surrounded by his staff was the Emperor Claudius himself, a poor figure of a man, but passably disguised in his tall crested helmet and his General-Officer's cloak. The Emperor gave the signal his troops rushed to the attack, the sham town was stormed and set on fire, and out of the flames real British chiefs were led out to make submission to the victorious Romans.

The Roman historian, Suetonius, is too polite to say whether the Roman citizens enjoyed the spectacle, or whether they thought it rather absurd. Next day two lots of British prisoners were set to fight each other in the circus and three hundred were thus killed to amuse the Romans. One thing these shows seem to suggest is that the Romans were exceedingly proud of having conquered a place so distant and tribesmen so fierce. The Roman soldiers had not at first been very willing to go to Britain, because they said that it was 'out of the inhabited universe'. The show, and the Emperor's short trip there and back, proved to the people of Rome that, however unpleasant it might be, Britain was at any rate not quite as bad as all that.

But the fighting was by no means over. As has been said, some of the best British metal mines, particularly the lead mines, were in the wildest parts of the country, among the Derbyshire and Welsh hills, on the Mendip Hills in Somerset, in Shropshire and north-west Yorkshire, and even in Northumberland, and the Romans were determined to get them. All lead was declared the property of the Emperor and Roman armies marched conquering north and west. Wales was subdued, and the whole of England up to Northumberland except Devon and Cornwall.

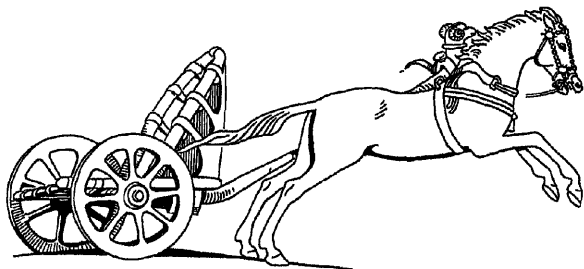
The British priests, the Druids—'men of the oak' as they were called, because of their sacred tree—hated the Romans, who brought another religion with them, and it was encouraged by the Druids crying vengeance, that the Britons of North Wales made a fierce stand

' Out of the
Inhabited
Universe '

Lead for
Water Pipes

against the armies of Rome in a battle on the north-west coast of Wales Anglesey was a particularly sacred place for the Druids

In AD 78 Rome sent a new kind of Governor to Agricola Britain, a man named Agricola He had some fighting AD 78 and a good deal of travelling to do, for he had to beat back tribes—the Welsh tribes as far as Anglesey again—and to march north against the Caledonians to the River Dee We know a good deal of his doings and of what sort of man he was, because Tacitus, one of the most famous Roman historians, was his son-in-law



ROMAN RACING CHARIOT

Agricola came not from Rome itself, but from Spain, another Roman Province He was simple in manner, honest about money, cheerful, a good soldier, sensible, and not unkind in dealing with conquered peoples He knew how to feed his legions and how to keep them in good health and spirits, and he always knew how to choose the best sites for the forts and blockhouses that the Romans always planted at the disturbed edges of any country they had conquered

He sympathized with the conquered Britons, partly because he did not himself come from Rome, and was not a noble He wanted not only to rule them well but to encourage them to become Roman and fit them

for membership of the Roman State From the seven years of Agricola's governorship are traced the beginnings



A ROMAN LADY

of a civilized life here, the growth of towns, and the spread of Latin, the language of the Romans It was Agricola who had the Roman road built which runs north from York to Corbridge-on-Tyne, through Newstead and right on to Inveresk outside Edinburgh With Agricola begins the real Roman civilization of Britain

The Romans were hard schoolmasters, but they had a great deal to teach, and the Britons were people who could learn The first thing that the Romans taught the British tribes was to keep the peace Under

the Romans the Britons had to make roads and walls, and fortifications to keep away "outer barbarians" like the Picts and Scots, from the north and west, and later the Saxons from the north and east

III

The Britons
learn to be
Romans

For generation after generation, the Romans ruled Britain, only settling here in very small numbers But they taught the Britons to be indeed Roman-British All over Roman Britain, Latin was spoken, or at least understood, the Roman Toga was worn, temples and private houses were built in Roman fashion

Great tracts of what had been marsh land were drained

and reclaimed, the fields were manured, and clay land was treated with sand. Finally Britain became an important wheat-growing country. So much wheat was grown that great fleets—on one occasion 800 vessels—came to carry away corn that had been grown in Britain. Orchards and herb gardens became common, bees were kept for their honey, cocks and hens and geese became plentiful, and flocks and herds increased and, strangely, the vine was introduced. Wine indeed was made in England for the next thousand years.



HOW THE TOGA WAS
WORN

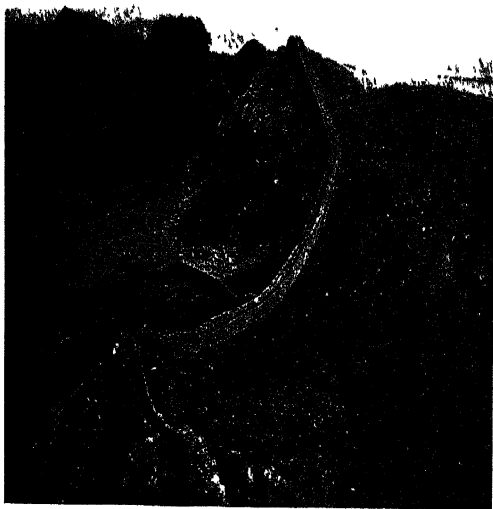
Nearly 100 years after Claudius' invasion another Emperor visited Britain. This was Hadrian. Britain

was still being troubled by raids from the wild tribesmen from Scotland and Ireland, and Hadrian decided to build a wall with protecting forts from Newcastle to Carlisle. This wall was seventy-three miles long, eight feet thick and eighteen feet high, and long stretches of its foundations with its ruined forts and gates can be seen to this day. Hadrian's wall marked the northern limit of the Roman Empire which stretched from there, south to the River Tigris, where, thousands of years before, the Sumerians had built the first civilized cities of which we know.

Once more there was a long period of peace and prosperity, and, though the Roman taxes were heavy, yet on the whole the people lived better than they had ever lived.

If we look at Roman Britain after Hadrian's visit we find that farms and country houses—Roman villas—are

The Roman
Wall,
A.D. 150



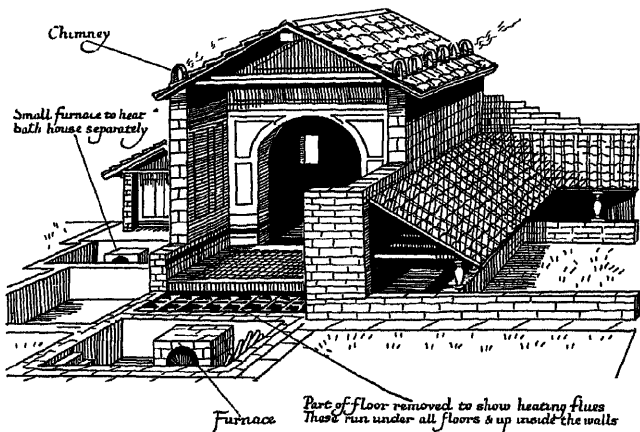
HADRIAN'S WALL

dotted about all over the fertile part of the country. Skilled British workmen were fetched to build in Gaul. Tin, lead, gold and copper were mined. There was much weaving, dyeing and making of pottery and glass. And so for another 100 years the peace of Rome lay over Britain and the Roman-British forgot that their great-great-grandfathers had once fought each other under petty British kings. A.D. 250-350

In 306 a Roman Emperor died at York, and the legions who were with him set up his son, Constantine (whose mother was British born), to rule in his stead. Constantine marched south with his legions, was acknowledged as Emperor in Rome, marched east again and founded in the east, Constantinople, 'the City of Constantine'. He is to be remembered for more, however, than the founding of a second Roman Empire in the East, for he became the first Christian Emperor. There were at that time very few Christians in Britain, but it was under this Emperor (whose mother was British) that, 300 years after the birth of Christ, Christianity became the official religion of the Empire, and so of Britain. The First Christian Emperor

Historians call the hundred years between 250 and 350 the Golden Age in Roman Britain. Unfortunately we know very little about how the poor people lived, but certainly the houses and lives of the rich people were more civilized than they were for more than a thousand years to come. For instance, the Roman-Britons were clean and bathed regularly. Their houses had baths, and water was generally laid on, the houses had central heating, and glass for their windows. There were fine towns built solidly of stone, great temples, and arenas for games and shows. The Roman-British nobles, and most of their servants, could read and write. Above all, what they read and wrote was Latin, so that they could talk and write letters to people living in Spain, France and Italy, Egypt, and Greece, and even as far away as the new Roman Empire in the East whose capital was Constantinople. But we must not imagine Golden Age of Roman Britain

things as perfect! Though Britain was peaceful, civilized and prosperous, many of the Britons were slaves. Even among the rich there seems to have been little or



A ROMAN VILLA IN BRITAIN

no progress in learning or science, and no particularly beautiful works of art were made, or fine poetry written

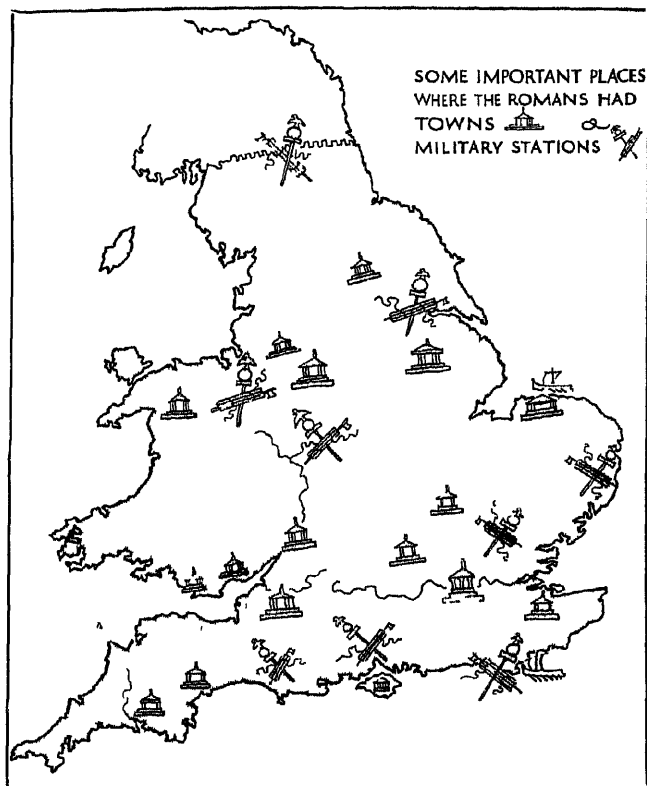
POINTS TO NOTICE IN CHAPTER 4

1 The Romans came to Britain partly in order to explore, partly to safeguard Gaul which they had already conquered, and partly because they wanted lead and gold, which they could get here

2 Four Romans who had to do with Britain were Julius Caesar, Agricola, Hadrian and Constantine

3 While the Romans ruled Britain, stone cities with water supplies and drains, roads and bridges were built. Land was drained and forests cut so that Britain became one of the great wheat-growing provinces of the Roman Empire. Roman-Britons also mined metals

4 We know so much about the Romans because they were excellent historians and left full written records, and also-



Trace this map of Roman Britain and put the tracing over the Map on p 21 Many of the Roman towns had ruins of old Bronze and Stone Age villages under their foundations

because they built in stone and made many things in metal, glass and pottery which can be seen to this day

5 There were never many Romans in Britain, but the Britons became Roman-British

6 Even at first many of the British tribes were on the side of the Romans

CHAPTER 5

THE COMING OF THE BARBARIANS

BUT already, even in the civilized and prosperous time of which we have been speaking, events had begun to happen that were later to bring Roman civilization in Britain to an end. It has been suggested that there were at this time two main causes of war. One was when the rulers of a civilized people like the Romans wanted more of such things as corn and lead, and found them in a less civilized country, and only defended by tribesmen. The second was when warrior tribes attacked rich cities and plundered them.

In about the year 300 the British Romans were con- A.D. 300-400
cerned not only with defences against the wild Picts and Scots, but against certain sea robbers—more dangerous because they were better armed. The Roman-Britons raised up a series of earthworks along the coast of the eastern counties on what they called ‘The Saxon Shore’. For here, from time to time, raiders who came in narrow black ships swept down on the valleys and cornlands and carried off as much treasure as they could pack into their vessels.

These sea thieves knew how to make helmets and armour, and how to weave and embroider cloth, and the fact that they got here at all proves that they could make seaworthy boats.

At home they were fairly good farmers too and had laws of their own. But it was not to farm or to obey laws that they came to Britain. They don’t seem to

have wanted to learn anything from the Roman-Britons, but only to burn or to carry off anything that their ships could hold. The Roman-Britons hated and feared these Saxon barbarians.

Rome has
trouble with
Barbarians

Now Britain was by no means the only place where this sort of raiding and plundering by less civilized people was going on. The danger from barbarians was growing all over the Roman Empire, and if the reader follows events in Britain he will see on a small scale what was happening to Roman civilization all over the world. Many historians think that the fall of the Roman Empire and also the final invasion and conquest of Britain by the Anglo-Saxons happened because of something that was done a very long way off. They trace

The Great
Wall of
China

it to the fact that far away—in another world as it seemed—the civilized Chinese on their western border had done exactly what the Romans on their northern border in Britain had done. The Chinese—being also troubled by raiding barbarians—built a wall. The Chinese being a very great people indeed, built the most tremendous wall that was ever made before or since. It is known as the Great Wall of China, and mile upon mile of it, and tower beyond tower, stands to this day. As long

The Huns

as it was properly guarded, the Great Wall did exactly what the Chinese meant it to do, that is to say, it kept out the fierce Hunnish tribes who wandered with their herds and horses over the great plains of central Asia. The next stage was this. The Huns were not farmers, and had to wander to get enough grazing for the herds on whose meat and milk they lived. So, since they could no longer wander and raid to the east they began to turn west, and it seems likely that it was this that finally ruined the civilization that Rome had built up. It was not that the same Huns who had tried to get into China turned back and invaded the Roman provinces. But, just as when you push one, at the end of a row

Push one,
push all

of dominoes, the whole row moves, so, in the course of several generations, all the wandering tribes of Europe

and Asia felt the backwash of the wave of wandering Huns that fell back from the invincible and successful Great Wall of China. These easternmost Huns now began to push the Huns to the west of them. The western Huns on their wild horses pushed the German tribes that had lived in Central Europe towards the



ROMAN BRONZE CAULDRON FOUND AT SHILPEN FARM,
COLCHESTER, 1932
(NOW IN COLCHESTER MUSEUM)

west and north. These—moving slow with their ox wagons—spilled over the borders and invaded the Roman provinces in Italy and France. The seafaring tribes of North Germany and of Sweden and Denmark (when other tribes from Finland and Middle Germany crowded in behind them) found that their valleys would not grow enough corn, or give enough pasture for them and for the invaders. So the Saxons, the Angles and the Jutes

took to their long ships and sailed to more fertile places, first to steal corn and gold and weapons, and finally, as will be told later, to settle and live on land that other men had cleared and made fit to grow crops on

II

Angles, Saxons, Jutes The old *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* say that three different tribes—the Angles, the Saxons, and the Jutes—all sailed the seas to Britain for what they could get. The Roman-British called them all Saxons and hated them exceedingly.

A D 400-500 All through the hundred years between 400 and 500 these Saxons made more and more raids along the shores of Roman Britain, and each summer more and more ships came at a time. They were not regular armies, as the Roman invaders had been, but tribesmen who sometimes fought each other when they quarrelled about who was to have the plunder of any particularly rich place that they had robbed.

Sometimes the Roman-British tried to use the quarrels of these outer barbarians and bribed one lot to help them to drive out the others. But, as will be seen, this turned out to be a dangerous way of dealing with the Saxons, who seem to have been expert double-crossers.

Of course the movement of these northern warrior tribesmen south and east may have had nothing to do with the Great Wall of China, but then we are still left with no particular reason to account for why, year after year, more and more Saxon tribesmen should have crossed the sea. They wrote no histories, they only liked ballads and poems about the great deeds of their chiefs and warriors, long exciting tales full of dragons, and dwarfs, and magic, and they left no lasting buildings from which we might hope to discover the secret of why so many of them, year after year, faced the dangers of crossing the North Sea. Nowadays the children in North Germany and Denmark and the other countries from which they came are taught in their histories that these and their descendants the Norsemen or Vikings,

Black Ships

who invaded the west of Europe later, went simply for glory and love of adventure. But somehow that idea sounds as if it had been invented by comfortable historians in libraries, people who have never tried to sail across the North Sea even in a modern sailing boat. For we have got to remember that when the Saxons launched their ships the dangers of the sea must have been very great indeed. They had no compass, there were no charts, and no lighthouses on the British coasts. We only hear of the ships that got here, and of the plunder and slaves that they took. But the North Sea has not changed. The ships that the Saxons sailed had no decks, and had to be rowed most of the three or four days and nights that it must have taken them to cross, for they could only hoist a simple square sail, a sail that will only take a boat along if the wind happens to be behind the course she wants to travel.

Many and many a black ship must have been wrecked, and Ran, the cruel sea-queen that waits with her net below the waves—so sang the Saxon bards—must have grown fat with so many warriors to tear, and have rejoiced because of the gold and treasure from broken ships that had set out across the foam. Surely so many ships would not have come unless something had happened at home to make living a very thin business?

Whatever the reason for their coming, what we do know for certain is that, in spite of wrecks and gales and the enemies that awaited them up the uncharted creeks of Norfolk and Suffolk, and on the almost harbourless coasts of Northumberland, more and more of the Saxon tribesmen came each summer. Those whom Ran did not get, nosed their narrow black ships into every creek and harbour, until the Roman-Britons hated and feared them more than they had ever hated and feared the Picts and Scots and the wild Irish.

Now, up to about 400, there had always been a good stuffing of well-trained professional Roman legions in Britain. But, as we have seen, barbarians of various

Why did they come?

No Chart,
no Compass

Ran, who
eats warriors

A.D. 400

sorts were attacking and raiding all round the borders of the Roman Empire, and it became difficult for the Romans to spare troops to defend Britain—which was after all never an important province

All Bar-
barians not
alike

And here, if we want to understand many interesting little points in the story of what happened later, one thing must be kept clear. We have got to remember that all barbarians were not alike. The German barbarians who invaded the provinces nearer Rome came from tribes that had been living near the Romans and trading with them for a long time, so that they had learnt a good deal of what the Romans had to teach. For instance, at this time a good many of them were Christians. But the Saxons who invaded Britain knew nothing, and cared less, about Christianity, or Roman ways, or Roman law. They worshipped the gods of their own creeks and mountains. They were utterly different from the Roman-Britons, while the barbarians who attacked the other Roman provinces and Rome itself were not. For instance, quite a number of people who counted as Romans were partly or altogether German by blood. So though, as far as Rome was concerned, the invasion by German tribes, if they won, would mean the breakdown of the Roman way of governing and the break-up of the Empire, yet it would not mean nearly such a beginning all over again as if Britain were conquered by the Saxon barbarians who came from further north. Above all, the Saxons, unlike the barbarians who threatened Rome, had never heard of the Roman idea of living in peace with a conquered people. When the Saxons came they came to fight and to carry off as much treasure as they could. They and the Roman-British were enemies and nothing else.

War to the
Death

This was no doubt partly why the Roman-Britons did not either submit to being invaded, or try to live alongside the barbarians, as many of their fellow-provincials did. For two generations they struggled against the Saxons, for in Britain one or the other had to go

Nobody knows the exact story of what happened. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* (which were written by Anglo-Saxon monks and priests, but not until several hundred years afterwards) say that the conquering of Roman Britain took a hundred years. Nobody knows exactly what happened, but on the other hand, when archaeologists came to dig up the ground where Roman towns and villas had stood, they found some surprising evidence. All these towns, except London, had apparently been destroyed or abandoned at about the same time—somewhere about the middle of the fifth century. A D 450

Probably what happened was that the conquest took place in two stages. First—somewhere about 450, a large raiding army overran the civilized part of Britain, but avoided London because they thought it too strong to be taken. Otherwise they must have burnt and killed wherever they went, afterwards going back to their own country with the plunder. It was then that regular Saxon settlers probably began to come. Men and women, who came to settle, did, as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* say, land at different places along the coast and pushed their way inland. What seems certain is that the invaders did not all belong to one tribe and often liked each other very little better than they did the Britons whom they had come to rob.

Anyhow, whatever the story, it ended unhappily for the Roman-Britons. A D 500 By about 500 it seemed that everything that the Romans had done was undone, and even the more distant Roman towns like Uriconium (outside Shrewsbury, near the Welsh border) had been burned and plundered.

The great Roman baths at Bath fell in and were choked up, and wild birds came and nested in the brambles. The Roman-Britons themselves either escaped to Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Cumberland or Cornwall (all wild and mostly mountainous), were killed in battle, sold as slaves or starved. Such Roman-Britons as lived on near their homes were driven to hide on lonely moors.

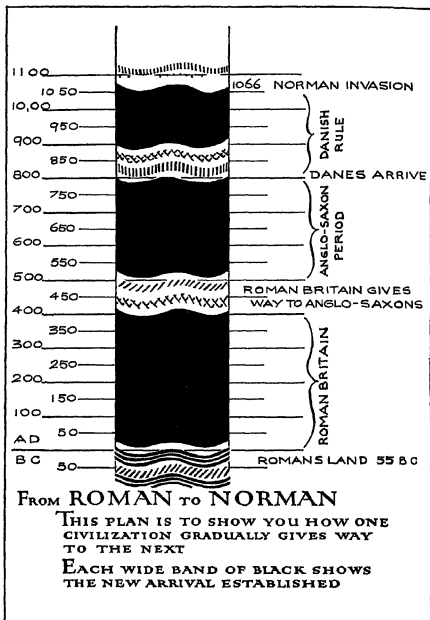


CHART OF INVASIONS

LATE NORMAN CASTLE



These are some of the kinds of buildings to be found during the periods shown in the chart opposite. The Danish Farmhouses would be something like this Saxon one. The Peasantry continued to live in simple wattle & daub houses of different shapes & sizes as they still do in many parts of the world today.

The 'Beehive' hut was the earliest attempt to build in stone & remains have been found in Cornwall, Northern Scotland and Ireland where stone was easily got. You will find a Roman British Villa on

another page



NEOLITHIC

PIT DWELLING B.C.

The turf roof would be supported with a post



LATE SAXON CHURCH
BUILT OF STONE



SAXON
FARMHOUSE WITH A "C" THATCHED ROOF

BRITISH
HUT OF
WATTLE
DAUBED
WITH CLAY
NO WINDOWS & A HOLE IN
THE ROOF FOR SMOKE



C AD 44



PRIMITIVE STONE
BEE-HIVE HUT B.C. & A.D.

or in caves, those very caves which, as we have seen, once had been the home of mammoth, reindeer and hyena. The Roman-Britons must often have fled in haste, with little time to do more than drive off cattle, pigs and goats. Women must have hastily buckled on their brooches of bronze or parti-coloured enamel, the peculiar workmanship of Roman Britain. The men girded on as hastily the swords whose delicate hilts of ivory and bronze were found there to tell the tale of their doom. At nightfall these people who had once lived civilized lives, crouched under the dripping roof of the cave or round the fire at the mouth. The ruin of Roman Britain was complete.

POINTS TO NOTICE IN CHAPTER 5

1 When barbarians began to attack the other Roman provinces the Roman legions were called back from Britain to help defend more important places.

2 The barbarians who attacked Britain came from the north and east—Angles, Saxons and Jutes. They were less civilized than the barbarians who attacked many of the other Roman provinces and did not try to carry on Roman civilization, but destroyed the Roman cities and ways of life.

3 The building of a great wall to defend China from the Huns may have been one of the things that set wild tribes moving west.

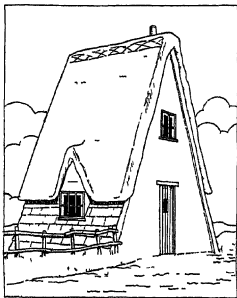
4 The Conquest of Roman Britain by the Saxons took time. The Britons who were not killed fled to Wales, Scotland, Ireland, Cumberland and Cornwall.

CHAPTER 6

THE SAXONS SETTLE DOWN

WHAT sort of people were these barbarian invaders, how did they live and what did they want to do ?

One thing is clear The Anglo-Saxons did not want
A D 500-600 to live in towns They were farmers when they were



SAXON HOUSE

This house was built in the way described but has since been restored and modernized under the name of 'Teapot Hall' A saxon house had no glass windows or chimney

not fighting, and they lived in villages The tribes who had settled near the coast still did a little trading and fishing, and they knew how to forge iron and to weave, but in the main they lived by ploughing and growing

crops and keeping pigs, sheep and cattle. They settled in small groups, one group cut off from the other by miles of marsh and forest, and no ruins of any Roman town in Britain shows any sign of their having used the great buildings or having tried to learn any of the arts of the Romans. They themselves did not understand building with stone.

They had a way of building, but they only made small huts. First they set up two pairs of timbers about sixteen feet apart, choosing a tree-fork rather than the shape of the wish-bone of a chicken with the two ends stuck in the ground. Along the top, between the two forks (or 'crutches' as they were called), they tied a ridge pole. To make the walls they stuck light posts into the ground, wove in brushwood, and then daubed the brushwood with mud. The roof they thatched with straw, reeds, heather, or whatever was handy. When the house was finished it looked rather like a boat turned bottom upward. In old Saxon poetry the house is sometimes called 'The Hearth Ship'.

How to
make a
Saxon
house

But the Anglo-Saxons' 'hearth ship' was well aground, and once they had settled in England most of them moved no more, but ploughed and sowed and tended their beasts for a living, or hunted the deer in the forests. The people who lived in the huts of the Anglo-Saxon village were often all members of the same family, and they and their slaves carried on their farming on a co-operative system.

Each farmer had his own piece of land, but he did not fence it off from that of the other people who lived in his village as a modern farm is fenced off. Instead, the whole of the cultivated land near a village was divided into two or three large fields, and each farmer had, as his share, several strips in each field. So that the best land should be fairly divided, these strips (of an acre, or half an acre) were scattered among those of the neighbours and divided from them only by a narrow ridge of turf which was not ploughed. (This is the way of farming

How they
farmed

in some places to this day—Poland for instance—the country looks like a patched coat) Each man took the crop from his own strips and did most of the work on them But he planted the same crops as his neighbour and he sowed when they sowed and reaped when they did In some of the work, such as ploughing, neighbours helped each other, and all their beasts grazed under the care of the village swineherds and shepherds When the harvest had been got in, the village flocks were turned out into the stubble This stubble was well worth grazing because the corn was not cut near the ground as it is to-day, but about half-way up, with a short reaping hook For the rest of the year cows and sheep grazed the waste lands and the pigs routed for acorns and beech nuts in the forests

All Anglo-Saxon villagers did not have the same laws and customs They had come from different parts of their own country and consequently brought different customs with them The Jutes, for instance, who settled in Kent, differed from the Angles and Saxons who settled around them, and Kentish customs continued to be different for hundreds of years Moreover, as the invaders spread over the country they had to change their way of farming to suit the different soils and climates that they found But they all did their work in some such way, and farming is done in very much the same fashion in many parts of Europe and Asia to this day.

Were they
free and
equal?

There is one extremely important point about the early Anglo-Saxon settlers about which historians cannot agree In the older history books you would read that all Anglo-Saxon villagers (except a few slaves who were supposed to be captured Britons) were free and equal But now historians do not feel so sure about this For instance, this period of English history does not really come to an end till the Norman Conquest—the last invasion of Norsemen—and certainly by then each village had its lord, who took for himself a good part of the crops and meat and milk, and kept the right of hunting

in the forests to himself. In some ways this lord was like a modern landlord, for he took rent from the farmers. The fact that these rents were paid in corn, wool, or work did not make any difference. They were rent paid for the use of the land to 'the lord of the manor'. But in other ways the lord of the manor, who was called a Thegn or, if he was very great, an Earl, was more like the chief of a tribe, or like a modern magistrate. He held courts in which offenders were tried and punished if they were found guilty, and, like a tribal chief, he had rights over his tenants, which made them not much freer than slaves. It was also his duty to lead the men of the village to war.

Nobody is sure how soon this system began to grow up, but it rather seems as if even the first settlers were not so very free and equal, but as if each man had his rank, with the slaves at the bottom and the Thegn or Earl at the top in each village, and above the Thegns and Earls a king whom they might, or might not, obey.

Later on this way of cultivating the ground and of settling disputes grew up into a fairly clear system which was later still called "the manorial system," but, as we shall see, there were constant muddles and disputes as to who had a right to what. It is easy to see that a country where people lived in isolated villages would not be very easy to unite under any one chief or king. Also that the lord of any particular village would always like to get lordship over another village whose farmers would pay him more corn and wool and meat, and from which he could get more forest in which he alone would have the right of hunting the deer.

II

For the next hundred years and more the history of the Anglo-Saxon villages of England and of the ten or dozen little kingdoms into which they were more or less united, is a history of constant fighting. After a while three bigger kingdoms formed out of the small ones

'Lord of the Manor'

Earls and Thegns

Northumbria, Mercia
Wessex

A.D. 600-700

There was Northumbria in the north, Mercia in the middle of England, and Wessex in the south and west. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* have a good deal to say about it all, but, till the time of Alfred the Great, all this fighting does not seem very interesting, for it is difficult to sympathize with either side, and it is not till nearly Alfred's day that, as will be seen, there comes a very real reason for taking sides.

But at the time we have now reached, what is interesting is the gradual conversion of most of the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity.

When they landed, the Anglo-Saxons worshipped a great many nature gods who belonged to particular mountains and springs and sacred trees that they had left behind them in their own country. Now these were not gods who had very much new to teach them.

Priests and Monks But from the Christian God there was a great deal that they could learn. They could learn not merely better ideas about right and wrong and how to behave, but also the Christian priests and monks were the only people who remembered the old learning of the Romans and sometimes of the Greeks.

Converting the Saxons So, when a Saxon king and his people became converted to Christianity, it meant among other things that some of them at any rate came in contact with priests and monks who could read and write, and who had other ideas in their heads besides fighting and farming.

Now, as has been said, the Roman-Britons whom the conquering Anglo-Saxons had chased away were many of them Christians, and when they fled to Ireland, Scotland and Wales they took their religion with them, and they soon began to send out missionaries to convert the British tribes that the first wave of Roman civilization had never reached.

St Patrick Some of these Roman-British missionaries became very celebrated. For instance, a Roman-Briton called Patricius lived on the Welsh bank of the Severn Estuary. He was carried off to Ireland by a band of raiders to be

sold as a slave. But instead of becoming a slave he became a celebrated saint—St Patrick—about whom, to this day, there are all kinds of legends and tales of miracles. He founded a monastery in Ireland, and from there a band of monks, with St Columba at their head, went over to Scotland. They founded a monastery on Iona, and from there missionary monks went out and preached to the wild Picts.

Now all this time (more than two hundred years) this Celtic Church, as the Roman-British Church is generally called, had been cut off from the other Christians and from Rome, yet they still spoke and wrote excellent Latin.

So of course did the Roman Christians, for though Rome had been sacked and many books burnt, yet a great deal of the old learning survived, and the learned men of Rome were in touch with Constantinople, where there still flourished the Roman 'Eastern Empire' the Byzantine Empire as it was then called.

At the head of the Roman Church was the Pope, who still kept the old Roman pagan title of 'Pontifex Maximus', 'the great bridge builder', and who still organized his Church very much in the same way that the Emperors had organized the Empire. The Roman Priests

The old story, first told by the monk and historian Bede, many generations later, about the conversion of England to Christianity from the Roman side, illustrates a point that is worth noticing. The reader may remember that the tale is that (somewhere between 590 and 614) a bishop whose name was Gregory (he later became Pope) was walking through the market-place in Rome when he saw some fair-haired and blue-eyed young slaves who were to be sold. He asked what nation they belonged to and was told they were from Anglia, at which he remarked, 'Not Angles, but Angels'! He was shocked to hear that, on the contrary, they were pagans, and determined at once that missionaries must be sent to the country from which they came. This he arranged, sending to England a monk called Augustine. Gregory and the fair slaves

This story suggests that Gregory either knew nothing about the Celtic Church, did not approve of it, or else did not think that it would be able to do the job of converting the Angles

A Mission-
ary from the
Church of
Rome

Anyhow, Augustine was sent first to Kent, probably because the wife of the King of Kent was a Christian Frankish princess. Augustine converted the King, and as a matter of course all his subjects were baptized too, and Augustine became the first Bishop of Canterbury.

So far, so good. But when Augustine tried to travel west preaching the Gospel, he got into contact with the Welsh Christians, who belonged to the Celtic Church. Like other Romans, Augustine considered that he was born to command, and he believed that the Pope ought to be the head of the Christian Church. The Celtic Christians thought themselves as good as he, and so the two sets of Christians were far from giving each other brotherly help.

Two
Churches

For about eighty years the two Churches could not agree. One incident will show the sort of thing that happened and what the pagans thought about it. Edwin, King of Northumbria, was converted, by a monk called Paulinus, to Roman Christianity, and (once more as a matter of course) his subjects were baptized too. But not long afterwards this Edwin was defeated by Penda, the pagan King of Mercia. So feeling that there was something wrong about Roman Christianity, Oswald, Edwin's successor, invited down the Celtic monks from Iona, and the whole of Northumbria went over to Celtic Christianity. But even that did not decide which Church was best, for in 642 Penda defeated and killed Oswald too.

A.D. 642

At last, Penda was conquered and killed in his turn, and a lord called Oswy became king of Northumbria. He thought that it was a bad thing to have two rival sets of Christians always quarrelling, and he summoned monks and priests belonging to both Churches to a conference at Whitby. When he had heard what each side had to say he decided in favour of the Roman Church.

because it meant a share in the civilization of the Continent. Oswy's decision was final, because, though he was far from ruling all England, it was in Northumbria that the Celtic Church was strongest. The Celtic monks went back to Scotland and Ireland and left England to the Roman Church. England won for the Church of Rome

Oswy's decision meant that it was now a straight fight between Pagan and Christian—and, most important of



AN ANGLO-SAXON ARCHBISHOP

all, that England was no longer cut off. England might be backward in some ways, but then all over the western world civilization had lost ground, and it was a good thing that what remnants there were of the old learning and the old civilization should be united. The Church of Rome was in touch with the old world. Architecture, law, philosophy and the Latin and also the Greek language were all kept alive in England through the Roman Church.

The Pope soon sent a very capable Greek named Theodore of Tarsus who at once set to work to organize the Church on the Roman pattern. Religious schools were set up which soon produced priests and historians who were as good as any in that twilight world, so good in fact that Frankish Kings and Emperors sent for them to help start such schools in their countries too. The Church in England had now of course to collect and send money to Rome, a point about which more will be heard later.

III

How did
the people
live?

But we must not exaggerate the benefit or even the importance of all this to most of the people. The peasants were the people who, as well as they could, and always in fear of wolves and war, grew the nation's food. The new culture and learning very seldom reached them, and the Church had not yet enough properly educated priests to send one to every village, so that, in many an out-of-the-way place, the old religion still went on, another point about which we shall hear more presently.

Priests and
Monks

The priests and monks, though they did not destroy like the fighting men, and though indeed in them lay the only hope of saving something out of the wreck of the old learning, yet had to be supported, and money (later called 'Peter's Pence') had to be sent to the Pope in Rome, and even as far as Jerusalem, where already pilgrims had begun to go to visit the places where Jesus had lived and died. What happened in England was that in many villages some bishop or abbot was given 'a grant of land'. This meant that a churchman and his successors became lords of the manor, and it was to the abbot or the bishop that the peasants had to pay their rent of meat, of corn, of wool and of work. In their turn these abbots and bishops had to pay towards keeping up the glories of the Pope's court and kingdom.

One last point, which at first sight seems as if it would

never have much to do with the history of England, has to be noticed here

Just about the time that this country was being converted to Latin Christianity, another religion was started not far from the Christian 'Holy Land'. In the Arab city of Mecca (see map, p. 80) Mohammed, having studied both the Jewish and the Christian religions, declared that he himself was the prophet of God. This new creed was a fighting religion, and the Faith of Islam, as it was called, spread among the Arabs and Persians and all the near-by nations Mohammed 570-632

POINTS TO NOTICE IN CHAPTER 6

- 1 The Saxons did not use the Roman cities
- 2 They lived in villages by growing crops and keeping herds
- 3 Probably the Anglo-Saxons were more free and equal than people had been under the Romans, but there was a chief or headman in each village
- 4 We know less about the early Anglo-Saxons than about the Romans because they did not build in stone and made very few things that last and left no written records
- 5 There were two different sorts of Christians in England the Christians who had been driven to Wales, Ireland, the North of England and Scotland by the heathen Saxons, and the missionaries from the Roman Church
- 6 When it was decided that the Roman Christianity was to be the official religion it meant that England was brought more into touch with what was going on on the Continent
- 7 Just at the time when this country was being converted to Roman Christianity another religion was started which later on became very important. This was Mohammedanism
- 8 Less things were grown and made in England than under the Romans and the houses were not so good

CHAPTER 7

ANGLO-SAXON LAWS AND CUSTOMS

About 700
to 830

It took a long time for all the kingdoms of Saxon England to become Christian, even officially, but then we have anyhow come to a time when, once more (as in the Bronze Age), things move very slowly and dates are very uncertain. However, during the course of about the next hundred years, Wessex, Mercia, Kent and Northumbria, the four chief kingdoms of England, did, as far as the kings and lords at any rate were concerned, quite definitely become not only Christian but Roman Christian.

Very slowly, with a great deal of interruption from the wars that were always going on between the different kingdoms, a kind of civilization began to grow up. We were still a good deal behind the Franks and the other people who were closer to Rome, but we were quite definitely beginning to come along.

For instance, coined money began once more to be fairly generally used, which made trade much easier than simple bartering. Then, scattered about the country, particularly in the abbeys and monasteries, there were by this time a good many people who could read and write. But, what was probably more important from the point of view of the poorer people (which, at this time as at all other times, means most of the people), there began to be some attempt in more than one of the kingdoms of England to make clear what the customs and laws of the land really were. A King of Wessex who was called Ine made an effort to settle how

Settling the
Laws and
Customs

the life of the Wessex farmers ought to be carried on, and, with the help of people who went round and collected evidence of the best of the old customs, he laid down a set of rules which were called the 'Dooms of Ine'

This settling of law and custom was important in another way. The King could not do this work entirely himself and he had to call in his 'Witan' or Council of the elder nobles. In this way his more important subjects got in their word as to what was done.

One thing that ought to be noticed about the period between 600 and about 830 is that there was little or no serious trouble from fresh landings of invaders, so that the new uncertain civilization seemed as though it would have some chance of growing up. Orchards and little patches of garden were planted, bees were kept for their honey. It seemed as if a fresh kind of learning might grow from two sides. For instance, bards and poets wandered round the country chanting long poems and playing on harps. These songs were generally about Norse heroes, for the Roman-British seem to have had no poetry. There was a favourite poem, very long and full of adventures, about Wayland Smith, who forged wonderful swords, married a Swan maiden and had all kinds of adventures, before old and lame he came to live in a cave in Berkshire. Then there was the tale of Beowulf, a great hero who fought a monster called Grendle, who had carried off warriors from the king's mead hall to his home below a lake, and stories of giants, dwarfs, enchantments, dragons and wicked witch-women, like the beautiful tale of 'Childe Wynde'. In the monasteries and convents there was quite a different kind of poetry. Christian chants, and splendid versions of the Hebrew Psalms, were sung in the churches, as well as being beautifully written out on parchment with little pictures on the borders and tall gilt letters to begin the pages. In the convents, too, very fine embroidery with silks and gold thread was done to ornament the clothes of bishops and kings - these embroideries gener-

Tales and
Poems

Grendle

Hebrew
Poems in
Latin



PLOUGHING

Clumsy wooden plough with wooden wheels Donkeys were used
at this time Compare with page 30

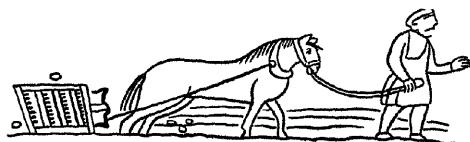
Bede, 735

ally had little pictures of the lives of Christian saints. Fine goldsmith's work was also done. Bede was a monk to whose monastery at Jarrow 600 scholars came to learn, and from Bede's History historians have learnt much of what is known about this time. He was a man who loved both to teach and to learn.

Progress
hindered by
constant
fighting

But progress was not at all fast because, in spite of there being no invaders, there was always a great deal of fighting going on. The rulers of Wessex fought the rulers of Mercia, and they fought the rulers of Kent, and first one, and then the other, under some particularly good fighting king, managed for a time to lord it over the others.

All this warfare meant poverty for the common people, for, with most of the strongest men of the village so often away, it was difficult to grow enough food, let alone get more land under cultivation and improve the buildings. But in spite of all this, about the middle of the eight hundreds it seemed as if the Anglo-Saxons were going to be able gradually to grow into a people at least as civilized as those in the western part of Europe. Some of the bishops and kings and great nobles made pilgrimages to Rome, and there, and on their way through France, they saw for the first time great cities, and the half-Roman pomp of the great Emperor, Charlemagne. He considered himself the successor of the Roman emperors, ruled over France, part of Germany and much other land, and was the most magnificent man of his day. After his death his name became a legend like



HARROWING.
Work horses were also scarce

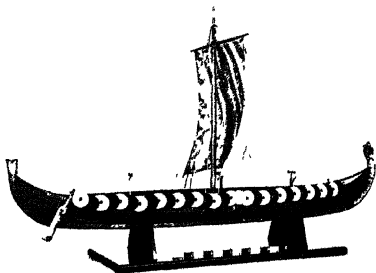
that of Solomon—‘ as wise as Solomon ’, ‘ as mighty as Charlemagne ’

II

But, unfortunately, fresh barbarians, who cared nothing about picking up the bits and beginning a new sort of civilization, were on their way. People whom the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* call simply ‘ Heathen Men ’ began once more to cross the seas in long ships and to raid and harry the coasts. The Anglo-Saxons feared and hated these new pirates as much as the Roman-British had hated and feared their ancestors, the Saxons. We know a good deal about these later invasions: how, one year, thirty-five ships came to Charnmouth, how, another year, the ‘ Heathen Men ’ made an alliance with the British who lived in Cornwall, and how, after a fierce battle, the King of Wessex defeated them, how, another time, they raided Northumbria and killed the king. Just as before, when the Saxons themselves had first come, the ‘ Heathen Men ’ grew bolder every summer.

At this point, it seems worth while to try and find out who these ‘ Heathen Men ’ were. They were called ‘ the Vikings ’, ‘ the Norsemen ’ or ‘ the Danes ’. They came from Norway, Sweden and Denmark and they were very like what the Saxons had been three or four hundred years before, only they were still fiercer fighters and almost unbelievably good sailors. Like the Anglo-Saxons, they built houses that looked rather like boats turned bottom up, and they often spoke of a house as a ‘ hulk ’, a word that to this day in English means an old

ship without mast or rigging. A Viking ship was long, rowed by the forty or fifty warriors who sailed her, had a square sail and was not decked. The warriors locked their round wooden shields all round her bulwarks for extra protection, but there was no real shelter from rain or heavy seas. She had no rudder but was steered by a big oar.



VIKING SHIP (from a model)
(Compare ship on page 35)

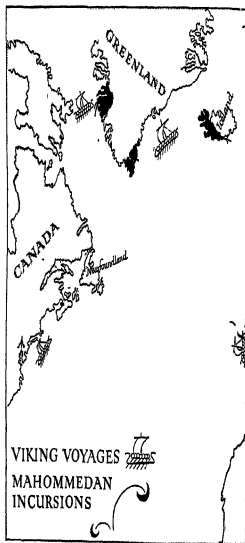
In fleets of such ships the Norsemen went 'a-viking' much further than the Saxons had ever dared to go, and their voyages sound almost unbelievable, for still there was neither chart nor compass nor lights on the coasts to guide them. Nevertheless, they went right round France, round Spain, into the Mediterranean, plundered in Morocco, round the Adriatic as far as Venice, where they carved their queer writing (Runic it was called) under the statue of a lion that they found there. 'Twice they attacked the rich and mighty Constantinople, or Byzantium, the city which (see Chapter 4) Constantine,

Viking
voyages

the first Christian Emperor of Rome, had set up as the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire. The Vikings also went north and east to Russia and, most extraordinary of all, there seems no sort of doubt that, sailing round by way of Greenland, they got as far as what is now the United States of America, for there also runes have been found on the rocks that can only have been carved by the Norsemen.

But unfortunately carving runes—a word or two only with the name of the chief as a rule—was all the writing the Vikings ever did. Like the Saxons, they sang splendid poems, told long stories all full of dragons and dwarfs and monsters (just as the Saxons had done), but they wrote nothing down, their long ships kept no records as all ships do now, so we know hardly anything about these extraordinary people except what their enemies What their enemies said had to say about them, and what archaeologists, working in the countries from which they came, have discovered about their jewels and weapons and shirts of mail. Their enemies had plenty to say, and all of it was bad. They said that they were cruel and destroyed for the sake of destroying. However, as we shall find, people always tell horrible tales about the wickedness of their enemies. There seems to have been something to be said on the other side. For instance, the Norsemen, when they did settle down, were reasonably good neighbours, and once the fighting was over, would live fairly peacefully with the Anglo-Saxons, French, or whoever their neighbours happened to be, and they both taught such neighbours and learned from them. They were often traders, they built earthen fortifications, and behind these gathered Danes built earthworks into small towns, and they were always magnificent seamen.

However, there was no doubt that, at the time to which we have come in this story, the Vikings, or 'Danes', as the Anglo-Saxons usually called them, were the people who seemed destined to smash the small beginnings of a fresh civilization that was growing up among the Anglo-Saxons in England.



MAP SHOWING
The black patches are Viking settlements



VIKING VOYAGES
Mohammedan incursions shown by crescents

Why they left the land where they lived, we shall never know. One reason may have been that the crops at home were poorer than usual. One thing is certain, that in Norway and Denmark a usual punishment for the beaten side after a civil war was banishment, so that the Norsemen who left home were probably the most turbulent and warlike. They certainly sometimes left unwillingly. One of the old poems, which tell historians most of what they know about this time, calls the sea 'The whale road', 'The path of Exile', and 'The Seafarer' speaks of the bitter weather to be endured—'Hail, coldest of grains'—and says that the writer must set sail because 'he had no protecting kinsmen'.

III

But we must try to get an idea of what things were like for those who lived in Anglo-Saxon England at the time to which we have got, and perhaps this can best be done by telling the story of a particular Anglo-Saxon in some detail. Then comes the question—which Anglo-Saxon?

Now though, as we all know, most people do not live like kings, yet it sometimes happens that at any particular period in any particular country the ruler, chief or president is the person that we know most about. Quite certainly we know more about King Alfred than about any other man or woman who lived in England between 800 and 900, but, as it happens, this is not only because he was a king, but because he was a man who interested people.

POINTS TO NOTICE IN CHAPTER 7

- 1 Anglo-Saxon kings made their laws with the help of a Council called the Witan
- 2 England was divided into a number of kingdoms
- 3 The 'heathen men' were generally called Danes by the Anglo-Saxon chroniclers. Elsewhere they were more often called Vikings or Norsemen

ANGLO-SAXON LAWS AND CUSTOMS 83

4 These Danes and Vikings made tremendous voyages in their long ships, getting as far as, for instance, Venice and America

5 The 'heathen men' have told us very little about these things. Like the early Saxons they left hardly any written records

6 The Saxons were beginning to build stone churches and to do beautiful embroideries and to work in gold. They planted orchards and kept bees

CHAPTER 8

ALFRED THE GREAT

IN the year 849 a son was born to Ethelwulf, King of Wessex, whom his parents named Alfred. He was the youngest of several brothers, so, though there was nothing in the Anglo-Saxon customs to prevent a younger son from succeeding his father, yet, as a grown man of the Royal kindred was generally chosen by the Witan, and his father was fairly old, it seemed more likely that one of his elder brothers would be king. His mother taught Alfred to read, and, because he liked it, he learned a great deal of Anglo-Saxon poetry by heart.

The Court
moves
continually

As all kings did in those days, Alfred's father spent his time travelling about his kingdom, living first on one Royal estate, and then, in a month or two, travelling on to the next, his bodyguard of men-at-arms, his queen and the children travelling too. Sometimes they moved because the Court had eaten up all the provisions that were due to the king and his men from that particular estate, sometimes because there was fighting going on in another part of the kingdom, and the King, as chief general, had to be there. All through his childhood the Danes were the people that Alfred heard of as the chief troubles and dangers of his father's kingdom. The worst of it was that, as the chroniclers wrote, 'It was no profit' to the Anglo-Saxons even if they won a battle and drove the Danes off, 'for every summer a fresh fleet and a greater army appeared on the shores.' However, when Alfred was a boy, things had not yet

- become very bad, and when he was nine years old his father sent him on a pilgrimage to Rome. There, after a journey that lasted many weeks, Alfred saw a city such as he had never imagined, for there were only villages in Wessex. Pilgrimage to Rome

When Alfred saw it, the city of Rome had been several times plundered by barbarians, but it had always been built up again and now it was surrounded with a wall with forty-four strong towers. Inside there were monasteries and churches, mostly built out of the marble and fine hewn stone of Imperial Rome, while the great ruined pillars of the Forum and the enormous arches of the Coliseum (which even now seem huge, surprising and splendid) towered over everything. Inside the Christian churches, the light of thousands of candles gleamed on walls covered with gold and glittering mosaic. There were shrines and tiny reliquaries covered with jewels, and amid prayers and chanting the pilgrim was shown the miracle-working bones of saints and martyrs. Because the boy Alfred was son to the King of Wessex, he was given a magnificent reception by the Pope, who was lord of all this splendour. The Pope gave the boy a purple robe and a sword and blessed him. Huge, surprising, splendid
A purple robe

After a month or two Alfred set out again for England. The journey must have been very long and difficult, for at this time the old Roman roads were nearly worn out and the bridges half ruined, and there were no more posting horses and inns as there had been in the time of Imperial Rome.

And yet, in spite of a journey that sounds to us almost impossibly difficult for a child of nine, not long after he got back to Wessex, Alfred set out again, this time in the train of his father Ethelwulf. On this second pilgrimage he and his father brought very fine gifts to the Pope. If we remember that the King no doubt brought what he considered the best that Wessex could produce, it is interesting to find from the Chronicles that they brought, among other things, a crown of pure Back to Rome again
Gold-work

gold, a sword with gold ornaments, a gold-embroidered tunic, other embroidered stuffs, and four silver-gilt hanging lamps. English embroidery and gold-work were famous at this time.

Alfred and his father lived in Rome for a year. It was probably these two pilgrimages, and the fact of having lived a whole year in what was then the most civilized city in the world, that made Alfred so determined, when (in the end) he became king, to improve Wessex. He had seen with his own eyes that the thing could be done, and that priests need not all be ignorant and nobles all illiterate, and caring for nothing but feasting and fighting.



ALFRED'S JEWEL

The original use of this ornament is not known. The design is in blue and green enamel covered with a crystal. The setting is pale gold, with a motto, 'Alfred had me made'. It was found in a bog in Somerset.

Danes
busy
elsewhere

Alfred's father had been an oldish man when they set out, and not long after he and his son got back to Wessex Ethelwulf died. After a good deal of trouble (which nearly amounted to civil war) Alfred's two elder brothers each inherited a half of their father's kingdom.

It happened that Wessex was then not much troubled with the Danes, who, instead of attacking England, were

sailing round the coasts of France, pillaging Spain, and, as we have seen, even carving their runes on pillars

A.D. 871 in Venice on the far side of Italy. It was during this interval, when his brothers had divided the kingdom, and when the Danes were busy in richer lands, that Alfred, who was still a boy, had time to learn so much.

Anglo-Saxon poetry by heart, and to study history, geography and the lives of the saints. This studying he did either with a secretary or a tutor who could read Latin well, for, to Alfred's grief, he himself was never very good at the language in which all learned books were written and which all learned men spoke.

The Danes
come back

But this quiet time did not last long. The Danes began to raid the English coasts again, and now they organized their raids better, and, instead of coming only in the summer, they spent the winter in England, their armies safe behind well-made earthworks. When the summer came, they seized the Anglo-Saxons' horses—'horsed themselves', the chronicles call it. Then they pushed inland and built another earth-fort further on, the idea being always to have earthworks handy to which they could retire if the Anglo-Saxons should beat them in battle. Alfred helped his brother to fight them and to everyone's surprise 'fought like a wild boar'. After a big battle against the Danes at Ashdown, Alfred's brother, now sole king, died after reigning for five years, and with general consent, Alfred, who was then thirty-three, was made king.

A.D. 871

Alfred
chosen king

The Danes attacked again almost at once, reinforced by a 'summer army' which had come by sea. This time, Alfred, after some unsuccessful fighting, got rid of them by paying Dane Geld—that is money to go away. For once the Danes kept their bargain, and Wessex was let alone for four years.

The West Saxons badly needed a little peace, for they were, says a chronicler, 'all broken by the heathen folk'. However, the first thing that they did was to dispute about the dead king's will. Alfred brought the will to the meeting of the Witan, or council, of the West Saxons.

When it had been read [wrote Alfred afterwards], I prayed them all, by the love they bore me, not to hesitate for love or fear of me to declare the folk-law, and I gave them my pledge that I would never bear any of them a grudge for speaking according to the law.

Folk Law This bringing of the king's will to the Witan was important, because it shows that Alfred was not an absolute king or dictator, but that he, and his subjects, thought of the folk-law as something that everyone, including the king, was bound to obey. We shall see this idea coming up again and again, for some kings of England believed that they could do what they liked, so that it is interesting to see that Alfred, king of the West Saxons, seemed to take it as a matter of course



A MINSTREL

that he should be what was later called a 'Constitutional Monarch'—that is to say, a king bound by custom and law.

Meantime, the Danes were still fighting and plundering in Mercia. The Chroniclers tell how the bishop of Worcester had to sell church lands 'on account of the immense tribute of the barbarians in the year when the heathen sat in London'.

Five years after Alfred had bought them off, the Danes—having plundered the other kingdoms of England and ravaged France—invaded Wessex again.

Danes
attack
Wessex, 878

They raided the lands of the West Saxons [say the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*], and occupied it and drove the folk overseas or subdued them, except King Alfred, and he with a little band, went forth uneasily into the woods and moor fastnesses.

It was of this time—while he was wandering in Somerset—that the famous story of Alfred and the Cakes is told, and the rather less well-known story of

how, in order to find out their plans, he visited the Danish camp disguised as a minstrel (This story must, by the way, mean either that minstrels were so popular that they could wander about as they pleased, or else that Alfred knew the poems that the Danes liked, so well that they took him for a Dane)

Though Alfred had been beaten, he soon began to try to gather an army

He rode to Egbert's stone on the east of Selwood, and there came to him all the men of Somerset and Wiltshire, and those of the Hampshire men that were on this side of the sea, and they were glad of him

Asser, the Welshman (later friend, secretary and biographer to Alfred), says, 'They welcomed him as one restored to life after many tribulations' At the head of this army (considered big then, but probably of not more than about 3,000 men) Alfred attacked the Danes, drove them to take shelter in one of their forts, and then besieged the fort for a fortnight 'Compelled by hunger, cold and fear,' says Asser, the Danes made peace with the West Saxons 'They gave hostages while Alfred gave none, they swore to go away, and more than that, Guthrum, the Danish king, promised to be baptized and become a Christian

After that began a time when the Danes (though all hope of getting rid of them altogether had to be given up) were pushed east, to Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk, where land was given over to them and called the 'Dane-law' Further north, particularly in Northumbria, the Danes had really conquered the Anglo-Saxons, so that the Dane-law was in fact the whole country north and east of a line from about Chester to London

Alfred, who now reigned not only over Wessex but over most of what had been Mercia, made treaties with the Danes and rules were arranged for trading and settling disputes

And now (after about 886) comes the most interesting

Alfred's kingdom revives part of King Alfred's reign Alfred, who had been twice to Rome and who loved books (both the Anglo-Saxon poetry which was very like the Danish poetry, and the Latin books that the Danes despised), was determined to carry out his ideas, and to make some kind of a civilized country out of part of England that
A D 886 he ruled

Wessex and Mercia were in a very bad way The villagers and farmers were so few that the wolves that lived in the forest became bold and carried off pigs and sheep, and there was hardly enough corn left to sow The monasteries and the churches were 'all harried and burnt', and half their books and treasures lost, while the old customs and Folk Right had almost been forgotten

Alfred's ideas I desired tools and materials [wrote Alfred] to carry on the work that I was set to do, which was that I should virtuously and fittingly steer and direct the authority committed to me

The tools and materials that Alfred needed were, he said

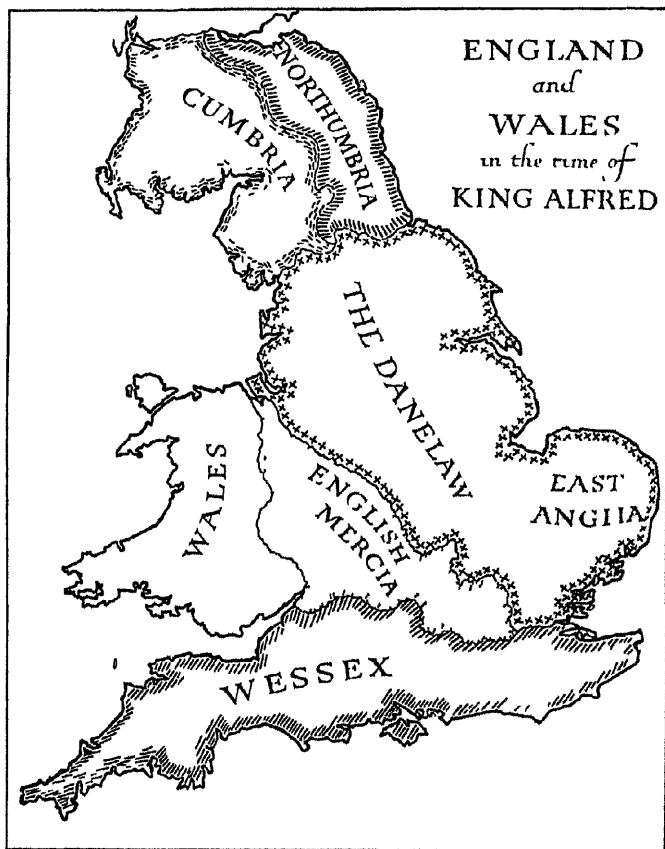
A well-peopled land, men of prayer and learning, men of war and men of work For these the ruler must have sustenance, land to dwell in, gifts and weapons, and meat and ale and clothes

He was, apparently, not a pompous king

Every one knows that all men came of one Father and one Mother True nobility is of the mind and not of the flesh

Alfred's Laws Laws were necessary Alfred worked with secretaries and learned men and wrote out the old custom-law of the West Saxons, such as the Dooms of Ine But he altered some of them, and chose between any two laws that contradicted each other He added the Ten Commandments to the other laws, and also wrote in the preface

What ye will not that other men should do unto you, do ye not unto other men From this one doom a man may



SITTING WITH THE DANES

Alfred's daughter was 'Lady of Mercia', and she and her husband were good friends to Alfred, so that Wessex and English Mercia were practically one kingdom

bethink him how he should judge every one rightly, he needs no other doom book

He adds

I dared not be so bold as to set down much of my own in writing,

and he showed the whole code to the Witan before setting his seal to it

Defence The Danes were of course now always there in their Dane-law and no one could be sure how long they would keep the treaties that had been signed, so one of the most necessary things was for the Anglo-Saxons to make arrangements for defence. Alfred divided the 'fyrd', the armed men of the country, into two armies, 'so that they were always half at home'. Then he arranged that forts should be kept up, and he had ships built that were

Fully twice as long as the Danish ships

A candle clock

Another thing that Alfred designed was a way of measuring time. He had determined to devote half his time to the service of God. As there were of course no clocks, he found it difficult to measure the hours on sunless days and in the night. So he had his candles made in such a way that each was long enough to burn for four hours. But when this was done he found that the draughts that blew in through doors and windows, through the chinks in the walls, and through the slits of tents, made the candles burn unevenly. So he devised lanterns made of wood with thin slivers of horn instead of glass, and in these his candles burned steadily. It seems worth while to tell how the candles guttered,

His difficulties

because it makes it easier for us to picture the uncomfortable way in which even a king lived. One extra difficulty Alfred had just because he was a king, for, like his father, he continually travelled about his kingdom. But in spite of all this, he and his priests and bishops who worked and travelled with him, managed

to do an immense amount of writing. Besides writing down the laws, they translated a number of books into Anglo-Saxon. There was a history, a book on religion, a book of psalms, a book on geography, and another on philosophy. When these books were done, copies were made in monasteries, and the books that he had translated made—and Alfred must have meant them to make—a little library, a beginning on which to build new learning. The King, in one of his prefaces, likens his translations to the making of an Anglo-Saxon house, where the builder goes to the forest, has a look at the trees, gets the wood he wants, but yet leaves far more behind still standing and growing in the forest.

His books

I did not wish to bring the whole wood home even if I could carry it. Therefore I exhort every one who is able, and has many wagons, to wend his way to the same wood where I cut the props. Let him get more, and load his wagons with fair rods that he may weave many a fine wall, and set up many a goodly house, and dwell therein with mirth and ease both winter and summer, as I never yet have done.

Once more, near the end of his life, Alfred had to fight the Danes, and, since they attacked on all sides, it was fortunate that Alfred now had a capable son to help him, and a daughter and son-in-law to defend Mercia. Alfred died either in 900 or 901. (Dates at this period are uncertain, partly because at this time and for the next four hundred years they began the New Year in various different months.) The Witan chose his son, Edward the Elder, to rule in his stead. A sentence of Alfred's own would have made him a good epitaph.

AD 900

What would I care for life if I knew nothing

His people never forgot him, so that two or three hundred years after his death many new stories of his deeds, words and wisdom were put into the Chronicles and into such tales as the lives of St. Neots and St. Cuthbert. More tales were told in prose or sung in

Legends
grow from
liking

verse The stories grew until Alfred was supposed to have been the first king to rule all England, though really he ruled less than half He was said to have been the king who brought in every good law that was made for several hundred years before and after his real reign In these later stories and poems he is called 'England's Shepherd', 'England's Darling' and the 'Truth-teller' He burns cakes, he writes proverbs, he visits saints and writes wise advice to his sons

If thou hast sorrow, tell it not to thy foe,
Sit thy saddle-bow and ride thee singing

These are shadows, but they show that a leader who is something more than a tribal chief or a pompous fellow, but who works with hand and brain, will be remembered not only by historians but by the people

POINTS TO NOTICE IN CHAPTER 8

- 1 Alfred went twice to Rome
- 2 On his journeys and at Rome he saw that other people were much more civilized than the Anglo-Saxons
- 3 Alfred could read and write and, with help, he translated books from Latin and was very much interested in new inventions and improvements
- 4 Anglo-Saxon kings did not live in one place but travelled about their kingdom A great many legends grew up round Alfred

CHAPTER 9

LAW COURTS, MONASTERIES AND FARMS

UNDER Alfred's son and grandson—Edward the Elder and Athelstan—his work of restoring law and learning was carried on, not only in Wessex but all over England south of Yorkshire. For by now the Danes had begun to settle down and become like the people among whom they lived. Those of them who settled in France at this time, for instance, built up a little state of their own. This came to be called Normandy—the country of the Northmen. The Norman Danes spoke French, and a hundred years later Normandy was one of the most civilized parts of Europe, and powerful enough, as will be seen, to conquer England.

Edward the Elder, Alfred's son, reconquered a great deal of the Dane-law, his son Athelstan pushing the Danes back further still became the first king who really can be said to have ruled all England.

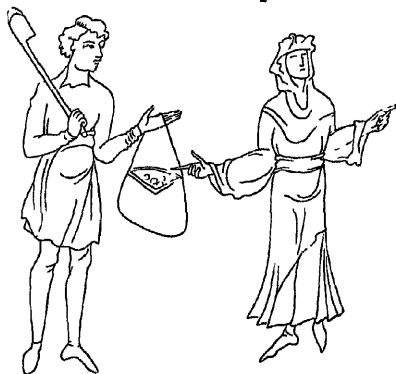
II

What did this ruling of all England really mean? The reader must remember that there were still no roads except the old Roman roads, which had almost fallen into decay. When a piece of country was said to be conquered by one side or the other it often did not make so very much difference to the people who lived in the village. For instance, the north, when it had been 'conquered', was too far away for the king to do anything but leave it in charge of Danes.

who were on his side, who kept most of their own customs

The kings took the lead in fighting, they travelled slowly round with their bodyguards, their minstrels and their families, but if disputes between ordinary men were to be settled and if peace was to be kept between one village and another, it was no good to think that one king could manage it all. Some sort of much more local government had to be set up—there had, in each

Some one
to Act for
the King



AN ANGLO SAXON PEASANT AND HIS WILL

This curious type of spade remained in use until about the thirteenth century

place, to be some one to act for the king. So now the Midlands were newly divided into shires and hundreds (groups of a hundred families), as Wessex had already been. Each shire and each hundred was to have its court of justice, so that people should, as far as possible, be prevented from fighting out their quarrels and revenging murders and other injuries themselves. This dividing of the country into shires, and this determination that people should not take the law into their own hands, seems sensible. What seems to us to-day, however, most extraordinary was the way in which an Anglo-

Saxon court of law set about finding the rights and wrongs in a dispute

In the first place, there were no regular judges, but all the most important freeholders of the shire or hundred met together to decide cases. Also, the court hoped to find the truth not by considering the facts, but by meeting to give God an opportunity to show publicly who was right and who was wrong. The court's work was simply to decide in a quarrel which side should 'give proof' and what was to be done if the proof was or was not satisfactory.

An Anglo-Saxon Law Court

For instance, suppose a man was accused of stealing oxen or wounding some one. Then the court would probably order him to bring men to swear for him. These might be asked to swear that they knew he did not commit the crime. In that case, they would be very much like modern witnesses.

But most likely they would be asked to swear, not that they actually knew the man was innocent, but simply that they thought that he was a man whose word could be relied on. If he could produce enough oaths to satisfy the court, he was declared to be innocent. For it was thought that his 'proof-swearers' would not swear falsely for fear of being punished by God. The number of 'proof-swearers' asked for, depended on the seriousness of the case. But all men's oaths did not count equally—the richer the man the more his oath was held to be worth!

Trustworthy

There was also another way of settling disputes or testing innocence. It was used mostly in the cases of accused people—strangers perhaps—who could not get any 'proof-swearers'. This method was the Trial by Ordeal. This was even more literally a code by which God was asked to show His judgment. One ordeal that the court might order was this. The accused man had to carry a piece of red-hot iron in his bare hand while he walked nine paces. Then his hand was bound up. If, at the end of three days, it had festered, that was a

Trial by Ordeal

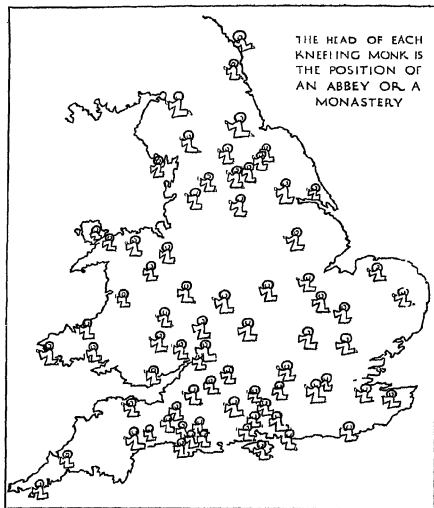
' Ordeal by
Morcel '

sign from God that he was guilty, if the hand had not been burned or was healing cleanly, it was a sign that he was innocent. Another ordeal was that the man must plunge his hand into boiling water. In the ordeal by cold water, the accused person was thrown into a river or pond. If he sank he was innocent, if he floated, guilty. The least unpleasant ordeal was when a piece of bread or cheese was solemnly called upon by the court to choke the man if he were guilty, if he were innocent he would be able to swallow it in the ordinary way.

Getting the
accused man
to Court

There was another thing in which Anglo-Saxon 'law and order' were different from those to which we are used. There were no police. So there was always the problem of making sure that the accused man would come to the court to be tried. The old way had been to make people's relations responsible for them. But, under Athelstan, two new ways were tried. A law was made, ordering every man to find himself a lord, and then making every lord responsible for seeing that his men came to court for trial. In some places, men were instead organized into groups of ten, and if one of their number failed to keep a bargain or to pay a fine, then the other nine had to pay it for him (so it was greatly to their interest to make him obey the law). In the same way, Alfred's successors tried to get rid of the blood feud (which still exists in some parts of the world to-day). Under the blood-feud system, if the relatives of a murdered man could not be revenged on the actual murderer, they either killed his nearest male relation or forced his family to pay a fine. This, of course, was highly inconvenient for everybody. It meant that a murder or an accidental killing was often followed by a small private war. And so it was now ordered that, in future, only the murderer himself might be punished.

Not only were the laws of England set in order, but schools and the Church, for which Alfred had cared so much, were growing



ABBIES AND MONASTIRIES

Trace this map and put it over the map on page 21 and your tracing of the map on page 53. You will then have three maps with the 'lowest oldest'. Monasteries and churches were often built out of stones quarried out of the ruins of Roman towns.

AD 946 to This side of Alfred's work was, however, not carried
975 on actually by Alfred's successors—they were more the usual type of 'strong' king—good fighters who knew how to keep nobles and warriors in order. The people who at this time cared for learning were chiefly churchmen. The most famous of them was Dunstan, the Abbot of Glastonbury, who later became Archbishop of Canterbury, and who, under King Edred and King Edgar, was by far the most important man in England.

The Now, there is going to be a great deal, all through
Monasteries the history of the next five or six hundred years, about convents, monasteries and monks, about proud abbots and saintly abbots, about rich and poor abbeys, about people who wanted to reform them, and later about people who wanted to get rid of them. Therefore, it would now be a good idea to try to get clear just what a 'good monk' and a 'bad monk' did, and what were the ideas that led people to found monasteries and convents and become monks or nuns.

Leaving the A good monk was a man who wanted to cut himself
world off from the world for the service of God and the salvation of his own soul. He 'left the world' (as going into a monastery was often called) for the perfectly practical reason that if he did not he would be called upon to serve the king or the lord of the manor in war, and because if he married and had children, all his time would probably be taken up in getting a living for them. Also, as we all know, it is very easy to get to like fine clothes and nice food, and those who like these things very much often spend most of their time trying to get them. Therefore the monk and the nun took vows, at this time generally those drawn up by an Italian monk called St. Benedict. They vowed never to own property, and never to marry. They vowed to live shut up in a monastery. They vowed to be humble and obedient to their superiors, and to eat only the plainest food and wear the plainest clothes. This was so that they might have time and free minds for religious duties, that is,

Poverty,
obedience

for meditation, for singing the praise of God, and for work such as studying, copying out books (there was no printing), helping the sick and teaching children

Being human beings, monks and nuns had to have a roof over their heads, some sort of clothes to wear, and fire to warm them, and above all, they had to eat. Now in some of the monasteries or convents the monks or nuns did grow at any rate a part of their own food. But, as the whole point was that a great deal of their time should be taken up with their religious concerns or with good works, they could not produce all the things that every living person has to have. Therefore some one had to give monks and nuns food and money. And they did. A rich nobleman whose conscience was perhaps not too comfortable would feel that he was putting things right with heaven by helping such holy people. And so very often he would make a present of a rich estate to the nearest abbey. This meant that the abbot or abbess became 'lord of the manor' and the poor people, the people who actually ploughed the land, raised pigs and cut the firewood, had to pay their rent of corn, work, beasts or butter, to the monastery instead of the lord.

Monks need food and shelter

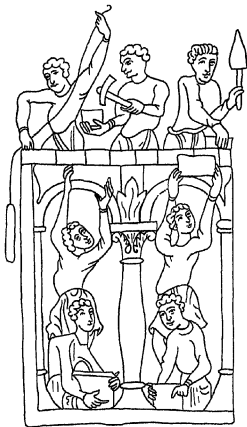
Great men's consciences

In this way the monks were left with time to pray, worship, study and teach. And the work they did was very important. It was the monks who had converted the English, the Germans, the Poles and the Scandinavians to Christianity. They kept alive some of the old learning at a time when it threatened to disappear completely, they were the historians of their time, and but for the works of Bede and the monkish writers of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, we should know next to nothing about the Anglo-Saxons. Theirs were possibly the only schools in England. And later their efforts to praise God worthily produced the best of medieval art — fine architecture, and beautiful carving, statues, pictures, illuminated manuscripts and embroidery.

Good Monks

But it is only the best monks and nuns who can be

praised in this way As will be seen, many monks and nuns failed to live up to the rules they had sworn to keep In particular they were often overcome by one or other of two dangers Some were so poor, especially



BUILDING A CHURCH

Notice the man with the plumb line

after events such as the Danish raids, that all their time
 Bad Monks was spent in getting a living And others, when they
 became rich, forgot their vows of sober living and enjoyed
 themselves to their heart's content, just like the lords
 and ladies around them Dunstan had to begin his

work of reviving learning by reforming many of the monasteries which he found in England. There was also another difficulty.

The Danes had made a speciality of burning down monasteries and killing monks. Dunstan found that very often the men who 'came back' when the 'heathen' had either been driven off or had settled down were priests and not monks at all. They had not taken any vows not to marry or own property, and in fact they lived very much like the laymen around them. A description of Winchester about 950 says

In the old Minster, where the seat of the Bishop was, there were priests of evil manners, beset by pride, insolence and evil living. They married wives contrary to the law and then put them away and took others; they were given over to gluttony and drunkenness.

Even where the monks were keeping their vows there were monasteries where they spent nearly all their time in competing with neighbouring abbeyes in the number and length of their services.

With the help of King Edgar, Dunstan began to put all this right. His own monastery of Glastonbury was turned into a centre of learning. The 'priests of evil manners' were driven out. New monasteries were opened and old ones restored, and parish priests were encouraged to open village schools.

'Law and order', like the monasteries, had to be paid for. And the price was paid by the common people—that is, the great majority of people—who now found their lives safer, but their position in society much worse. For instance, the price of the Anglo-Saxon success in driving out the Danes turned out to be a great increase in the power and importance of the king's special fighting men. The king rewarded the warriors with lands and the rank of Thegn. The same rank was claimed by the leading churchmen, the rich landowners and by any merchant who had ventured three times

Dunstan at
Glastonbury

Growing
danger of
fighting
Men

overseas on his own account And so in England we find a growing and wealthy upper class

The members of this upper class were not all of the same rank There were Thegns and above them Earls—men whom the king put in charge of one or more shires When an Earl was given several shires he was almost a little king Earls and Thegns all thought themselves mightily superior to the churls, or common people Their oaths were worth more in a court The penalty for killing one of them was greater Added to this, these same Thegns and Earls and churchmen were the landlords of the churls

Thegns
and Earls

Land-
holding in
about 950

As was said in Chapter 6, it seems likely that when the Anglo-Saxons first settled in England, a great many of them settled as freeholders That is, they paid no rents for their lands to anyone But by the time we have now got to, most of them seem to have been paying rents to some nobleman or churchman One way in which this came about was that during the struggles against the Danes a great many freeholders had given their lands to some Thegn or fighting man in return for protection The freeholder had then received them back again by promising to pay the Thegn a rent, and to recognize him as his lord

There has come down to us a description of the sort of rents that were paid by different types of tenants about this time

Rent paid
in work In some places he must pay land-rent, and a swine yearly for grass-rent, and ride and carry with his beasts, and haul loads, work and provide food for his lord, reap and mow, cut deer-hedges, bring travellers to the township, pay church-scot and alms-money, keep watch and guard the horses, and go errands far and near, whenever he is ordered

In some places the tenant must work each Monday in the year for his lord, or three days in each week at harvest-time He is wont to have five acres, more, if it is the custom of the estate And if he has less, it is too little, for his service must be frequent

The duties of a third sort of tenant were also various and differed in different places, but were

in some places heavy, in other light. On some estates the rule is that each week in the year he shall do two days of week-work, whatever is enjoined on him, and in harvest, three days of week-work and three days from Candlemass to Easter, if he lends his horse he shall do no work while his horse is away. At Michaelmas he must pay tenpence for rent, at Martinmas, 24 sesters of malt and two hens, at Easter a lamb or two.

Now one thing stands out very clearly from these descriptions. A great deal of Anglo-Saxon rent was paid in the form of work on the lord's land. There was not much money in use. And if there had been, there was no class of landless labourers whom the lord could hire to work his land. From the lord's point of view labour-rents were very convenient. But for the tenant they were often very bad. Payment in the form of work meant that it was to the lord's advantage to keep the tenant always on the spot, for the lord wanted to be sure that the work done should be done at the right time. So it became quite common for a tenant not to be allowed to leave the manor for more than a very short while without the lord's permission. By the time the Normans conquered England in 1066 many other restrictions had been added. This tendency of the poorer farmers to lose their freedom and to fall under the control of the rich was increased by various laws passed under Athelstan, for instance the law already mentioned that every man must have a lord. Moreover, Athelstan and his successors, particularly in the time of Dunstan, gave away many of their rights of holding courts of judgment to the Church and to other big landowners. This meant that many hundred courts were from now on held by the reeve,¹ not of the king, but of some abbot

Poorer
farmers
losing their
freedom

¹ A 'reeve' is some one who acts for his master. A 'sheriff' is a shire-reeve who acts for the king in a county. A 'port-reeve' is a man who is responsible for the tolls collected at the gate (porte) of a town.

or Thegn, who took the share of the fines formerly paid to the king. Thus the peasant or churl found that his local lord not only took part of his crops and labour for permission to farm his land, but was also getting control over his liberty. He was in fact well on the way to the semi-slavery which we shall find so widespread in the England of a hundred years later.

And how hard the lot of the unfree was, even in the golden age of Anglo-Saxon England, is brought home to us by a little dialogue used in the schools for the teaching of Latin. The various farm workers are made to describe their duties. The shepherd says

'I am not free' In the first of the morning I drive my sheep to their pasture and stand over them, in heat and cold, with my dogs, lest the wolves swallow them up. And I lead them back to their folds and milk them twice a day, and then folds I move and I make cheese and butter and I am true to my lord.

The ploughman goes on

O, my lord, hard do I work. I go out at daybreak driving the oxen to field, and I yoke them to the plough. However hard the winter I dare not lurk at home, for fear of my lord. But when my oxen are yoked, and the share and coulter fastened to the plough, each day I must plough a full acre or more. I have a boy to drive the oxen with a goad, who is now hoarse with cold and shouting. Verily, I do still more. I must fill the bin of the oxen with hay, water them, and carry out the dung. Oh! Oh! hard work it is, hard work it is, for I am not free.

Unfortunately, it seems that many Anglo-Saxons were not free.

What they grew And what were the crops grown on the Anglo-Saxon farm? What did people have to eat? Flax was grown for making linen clothes, and woad was grown for dyeing clothes blue, and madder plant for dyeing them red. Wheat, barley and oats were still the chief crops, but, as earlier, peas and beans were planted. Pigs, which were turned out to feed on the acorns and beech mast in the woods, were very important. Leeks were so

popular with the Saxons that the kitchen garden was often called 'the leek garden'. Cabbages, turnips, lettuce, parsley, onions, mint and garlic were also grown. Bees and orchards were also an important part of the Saxon farm, for honey was the only thing they had to sweeten their food with. No soft fruits were grown in gardens, such as strawberries and raspberries. The women of the family looked after the poultry yard and dairy. They spun and wove the flax and the wool and dyed the cloth too, and they also made the clothes.

POINTS TO NOTICE IN CHAPTER 9

1. A great many Danes were now living in England. There were different customs of farming land and of settling disputes in different parts of England.

2. Monasteries were important and churchmen did all the teaching. Very few other people could read or write.

3. Farm workers were not free and every village had a lord.

4. Spinning and weaving were done at home. People had gardens and orchards and kept poultry.

CHAPTER 10

TWO MORE INVASIONS

A D 980
Danes again

THE time from 925 to 975, whose history has been told in Chapter 9, was the last period during which the Anglo-Saxons were the only rulers of England. For, about the year 980, Danish longships began to appear again.

The kings of Denmark at this time were very much more powerful than any Norse kings had been before. Their kingdom included Sweden, and the Danish kings also had designs on Norway, so that, when they decided upon a serious attempt to conquer England, they were able to bring over quite large armies. Kings of England, on the other hand, had become weaker.

Ethelred the
"Rede-less"

We have described in the last chapter how the Thegns and Earls in England had become very much more powerful. Very large estates had been granted to many of the Earls (there were not a dozen of them at this time), so that Saxon Earls were often almost little kings. They got into the habit of playing for their own hands, and were by no means easy people for a king to control. When King Ethelred, 'The Unready' or 'Ill-advised', came to the throne, the Earls got completely out of hand. He was a man who seems to have made every possible mistake. First, he bribed the Danes to go away, which had the effect of making them come again, hoping for more easy money. Then he paid some of the Danes to fight for him, only to find that when there was to be a battle they deserted to their fellow-countrymen.

Worst of all, during a quiet time between the Danish raids, Ethelred, in 1003 and 1015, organized massacres of Danes living in England. This made the invaders much more fiercely determined to beat him. Finally, Ethelred was quite unsuccessful in his efforts to control his Earls, and one or another of them would fight either for the English or for the Danes, exactly as they thought fit. The massacre of 1015 was Ethelred's last and worst AD 1015 mistake. He died and was succeeded by his son, Edmund Ironside, who was an excellent fighter. But it was too late, his Earls would not stand by him, and the Danes were led by an extremely able king called Canute. King Edmund died a few months after his father, and in 1016 Canute became king of England. Canute

But the new king was busy trying to conquer Norway, while Sweden and Denmark were really the chief parts of his kingdom. So he had not much time for England.

Judging by the fact that a great many legends have come down about Canute (every one knows the story of Canute and the Tide), he must have been a remarkable man. He was only forty when he died, and as soon as most of the fighting was over, he seems to have been like Alfred in showing a real liking for religion and civilization. He was a pious Christian and, again like Alfred, he made a pilgrimage to Rome. There were a great many people in England, both Danes and Saxons, who were not Christians. Some of them believed in Thor and Odin and Hertha, and the other Norse gods. Possibly there were also people left in out-of-the-way places who believed in an older religion still, the religion of the Druids and the people who built Stonehenge. Some people believe that the fairy tales which we all know, of little men who lived in green hills, of mortal youths who danced with and sometimes married beautiful river and lake maidens, were quite real, and that the strange doings told of the "fairy people" were only stories of older races that had lost nothing in the telling. Many Danes Pagans

II

But to return to Canute One of his chief feats in England was that of keeping the Earls under control, but he seems to have done one thing which turned out badly Up to this time there had been eight Earls Canute had only four for the whole country, so each Earl had a domain twice as large These four were therefore almost little kings, and his successors, Harthacanute, Edward the Confessor and Harold (1042 to 1066), never succeeded in keeping them in order The story of their reigns is in fact really a tale of the fight for power between the great Earls of Wessex, Mercia, East Anglia and Northumbria

Canute and
the Earls

Canute's
successors

Godwin, the Earl of Wessex, usually came off best in this struggle It seemed indeed at one time as though England were going back to the state it had been in before Alfred, that of being in fact four separate kingdoms

Now, all through the time during which England was part of the Danish empire, the same sort of splitting up was going on in France and North Germany, the only difference being that in France the great noblemen were called Dukes and Counts instead of Earls The most northerly dukedom of France was the dukedom of Normandy, and the people of Normandy were not French by blood They were, as has been said, Norsemen, who had settled in France at the time when the Danes of the Dane-law had settled in England, and, just as many of the Danes had settled down peacefully with their Anglo-Saxon neighbours and had learned to speak Anglo-Saxon, so others had settled in France and learned to speak French But these French Danes (as we might call the Normans) had developed much more quickly than the Norsemen in England For one thing, the French, among whom they lived, were more civilized than the Anglo-Saxons, and the Norsemen had been eager to learn So by about 1042, when Edward the Confessor came to the throne in England, the Normans

The Duke-
dom of
Normandy

French
Danes

A D 1042



THE ABBEY CHURCH AT WESTMINSTER IN 1065

You can see a man putting up the weather cock to show that the church is just finished

Many Nor-
mans in
England

were the best builders, the best scholars, the best Churchmen and had the best organized army of the time. Although they spoke a different language—Norman-French—there was a great deal of coming and going between Normandy and England, just as there had been a great deal of coming and going between the Romans and the British before the time of Caesar.

Edward the
Confessor

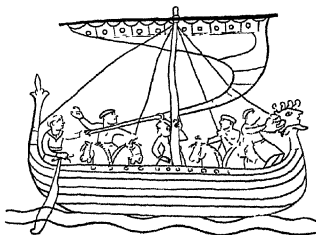
The more civilized Normans were very popular in the Court. Edward the Confessor had in fact been brought up in Normandy, and spoke Norman-French as easily as he did Anglo-Saxon. He gave large gifts of land to the Normans and many Normans became English bishops or abbots of rich English monasteries.

Edward had no child, and it was therefore a question who was to be the next English king. Godwin, the proud Earl of Wessex, thought that the new king ought to be chosen from among his family, who were distantly related to the Royal house. It was thought very likely that his son, Harold, would be accepted by the Witan.

Duke
William
comes on
a visit

The Duke of Normandy at this time was a very remarkable man called William. He was a cousin of Edward the Confessor, whom he came to visit in 1051. Why, thought William, should not he, instead of Harold, be chosen King of England? When he got home again he said that, during his visit to England, his cousin Edward had promised him the throne. According to Anglo-Saxon law, Edward had no right to do this. At the time of Duke William's visit, Earl Godwin had been in disgrace, and it seemed possible that civil war might break out, but the Anglo-Saxon nobles realized what the Duke of Normandy meant by this cousinly visit, and though they might not all want Godwin or one of his sons as king, they preferred him to 'a foreigner'. It was just when William's rather threatening visit had made the Godwin party less unpopular that Earl Godwin himself died, and his son, Harold, became Earl of Wessex. For a year or two Harold's prospects of succeeding peacefully to the throne (if the Witan chose him) seemed

very bright But then Harold had a piece of bad luck He was travelling by ship from one coast town to another—as people often did in times when roads were bad But the ship in which he was sailing was driven out to sea by a storm and, of all things, had to take shelter in a Norman harbour Duke William, on getting news of what had happened, immediately had Harold made a prisoner and, under threat of never letting him go again, made Harold swear that he would give up his claim to



THIS NORMAN SHIP IS OF THE VIKING TYPE CALLED
'SNAKE'

She was really much longer, but all early artists make their ships look too short (see also page 35)

the throne of England when Edward the Confessor died The story is that William let Harold think it was just a common oath, but revealed to him afterwards that he had sworn on some particularly holy relics True or not, this story shows just the sort of dodge that people at this time used Not long after Harold got back, Edward did die (on January 5th, 1066) and the Witan accepted Harold It is not known whether Harold did or did not feel himself bound to keep an oath which he had been made to swear in such a strange unpleasant way In any case his position was not comfortable

Harold's
Oath

Harold
chosen
King

The other Saxon Earls were jealous of him, thinking themselves as good as he, since he was not really of royal blood. Also his brother Tostig had an old quarrel with him and, as soon as Harold was chosen king, began gathering an army from abroad to attack him. Harold at the same time had news that Duke William of Normandy was busy collecting men to take by force the kingdom that he said was really his by right. William was well known to be an extremely good general, as he had already fought when the whole of the western part of the duchy of Normandy had revolted. Most threatening news kept coming through to Harold of the preparations which William was making. William was not only gathering his own nobles together but was also inviting the Counts of Brittany and Boulogne to join him. Some volunteer counts and barons (after what they could get) were even coming from Naples and Sicily. William was also making out a very good story about his claim. He said that both Harold and Edward had promised him the throne, and in the end he persuaded the Pope to bless the expedition. In the spring, news came to Harold that William was busy building a fleet. Meantime, Harold was calling out his own army, first, a smallish body of trained men and then the 'fyrd'—or all the grown men of the whole nation. But the worst of it was William did not attack! Months passed, and still the invaders did not come! This made things very difficult for Harold. The men he had collected got tired of waiting, they were needed for the harvest. They had already begun to go back to their farms when trouble came from quite another quarter. Tostig, Harold's brother, who had at last persuaded the King of Norway to help him, landed in Yorkshire. The fighting men on the spot resisted him, but news came that they could not hold out for long. Though it was most dangerous to leave the south, Harold had to march north with his large bodyguard, men joining him on the march. Harold won a decisive victory at Stamford

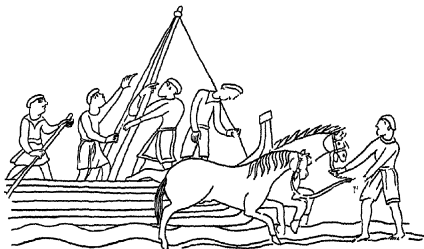
Jan 1066

Tostig
against
HaroldWilliam
against
HaroldAugust
Tostig
attacks
Harold

September

Bridge, on the Derwent (September 25th), and Tostig and the Norwegian king were both killed. They had led an army so large that it had taken 300 ships to carry them, but so many were killed that 24 ships were enough to carry away the men who were left alive. Harold's Victory

Tostig and the King of Norway's fleet had sailed down to Yorkshire with a north wind. Now the wind



LANDING SOME OF WILLIAM'S HORSES

William had 696 'Viking' ships and many smaller vessels

changed to the south, and, knowing that Harold was away fighting in Yorkshire William decided that it was at last time to bring over his army. He landed there and was no one to oppose him. But Harold was on his way. He made an exceptionally quick march south. In eleven days he and the best of his army covered 260 miles of almost roadless country, but he had to leave the slower part of his forces behind. William had already been in England for a fortnight when the Norman and Saxon armies got a sight of each other for the first time on October 14th. Harold's men fought on foot. His bodyguard were drawn up on high ground. The Battle of Hastings

and were armed mostly with two-handed axes or long swords. The rest of his men—the fyrd—were not nearly so well armed, some having only scythes and clubs. The Normans were very much better equipped, and, moreover, wore shirts of chain armour, while a great part of the Norman army was on horseback. There were, too, with the Normans, a large number of archers.

Norman
shirts of
mail

The battle began when the Normans fired a volley of arrows. Harold's men—from their higher ground—threw spears, javelins and throwing-axes and beat back the archers. Then the Norman foot-soldiers attacked, but could not break the firm line of Saxon shields. Then the Norman cavalry charged, but the Saxons stood firm, beating back the horsemen with their axes. When the Norman cavalry drew off again, a part of Harold's army thought that the Normans were beaten and flying, and ran down the hill after the enemy but were driven back.

They fight
all day

The battle went on all day, and it seemed as though it would not be decided at nightfall, when William thought of a plan. He ordered a sham retreat. This time a much larger part of the Saxon army made the mistake of thinking the Normans were flying. As soon as they had got them off their hill the Normans re-formed and cut the Saxon army to pieces. Harold himself and his bodyguard were left holding the top of the hill. The Norman archers now came up, and, with the cavalry, attacked again and again. Duke William had three horses killed under him, but at last Harold was struck in the eye by a Norman arrow just as the Norman knights broke the line, and the Battle of Hastings was won.

Harold
killed

The story of what came of the Norman Conquest will be told in the next Volume.

POINTS TO NOTICE IN CHAPTER 10

- 1 A Dane became King of England
- 2 Later, Danes who had settled in France came over and Norman-French was spoken at Court

3 Edward the Confessor had no heir and Duke William of Normandy decided that he would like to be King of England. He fought Harold, the last of the Saxon kings, at the Battle of Hastings.

4 The Normans were more civilized and better educated than the Saxons. Useful inventions, such as that of the water-mill, were more common in Normandy than in England.

POINTS TO NOTICE ABOUT THE PERIOD BEFORE WRITTEN HISTORY BEGINS

1 The Old Stone Age, the New Stone Age and the Bronze and Early Iron Ages lasted much longer than the whole of written history

2 There were probably less than a million people living in the whole of the British Isles during any part of that long period

3 It was not till the time of our great-grandfathers, when people ceased to believe in fairies, ghosts and goblins, that they could make sense of the clues by which we have now been able to piece together the story of early times

4 A discovery in the science of geology (the stratification of the earth) made it possible to know which way of living came first, and which beasts were contemporary with which men

5 The great discoveries, such as how to smelt metals, write, make wheels, hew stone for building and build ships large enough to make long voyages, were not made here but in warmer countries where the problem of getting enough to eat was easier

6 The new arts were brought here by many different tribes and peoples who came here at different times.

POINTS TO NOTICE ABOUT ENGLAND BETWEEN THE LANDING OF THE ROMANS AND THE NORMAN CONQUEST

1 The first Romans to come to Britain were merchants, and Greek and Phoenician merchants had traded here long even before their day

2 The Romans taught the British how to build up a civilization on the Roman plan and there were never very many Romans here

3 The Roman-British civilization lasted about three hundred years, and there were roads and bridges for every one and, for the rich, stone buildings, glass windows, central-heating and baths

4 The Saxon barbarians who invaded Britain were much more hostile to Roman civilization than the barbarians who invaded Rome itself, and most of the other Roman provinces

5 The Saxons almost completely destroyed Roman-British civilization in England. They lived in villages by growing crops, and an Anglo-Saxon Lord of the Manor was paid rent chiefly in work

6 An Anglo-Saxon king and his family travelled about from place to place, and he often rewarded his thegns, or fighting men, with grants of land, so that they became Lords of the Manor, as did also the churchmen, such as abbots and bishops

7 The growth of any new Anglo-Saxon civilization was very much hindered by perpetual fighting, first of one kingdom against another, and later by raids and invasions of the Vikings or Danes

8 Freemen in the villages often agreed to pay rent for their land to some fighting man in return for protection against 'heathen men' or other enemies

9 The rights and duties of lords and tenants under the manorial system were different in different parts of the country, and were always getting confused and having to be straightened out.

10 Towards the end of the time whose history is told in this volume most of the people who grew the nation's food were almost slaves

11 The Church and its monasteries were very important

12 The Normans were Danes who had settled in France
On the whole they were more civilized than the Saxons

13 Just as there had been Romans in England before Caesar there were many Normans in England before William the Conqueror

14 Before William, the Witan (Council of Wise Men) still had a right to choose the King from among the royal kindred

15 One of the difficulties of governing Saxon England was that the Earls were very powerful and apt to rebel and play for their own hands

16 At the time of the Norman Conquest there were very few bridges, roads or stone buildings in England. The method of farming was very primitive. White bread was a luxury, there was no satisfactory way of preserving meat in the winter and not enough crops were grown to keep big flocks and herds alive when there was no grass

17 There were still not more than 2,000,000 people in the whole country

18 The sources from which historians get the story of this period are (a) The works of Roman historians such as Suetonius and Tacitus who were often telling the story of their own times (b) The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (c) Poetry and popular stories and legend (d) All this checked up by what was found by archaeologists who dig up the sites of Roman cities, British camps, Saxon villages and Danish earthworks

VOLUME II

1066-1485

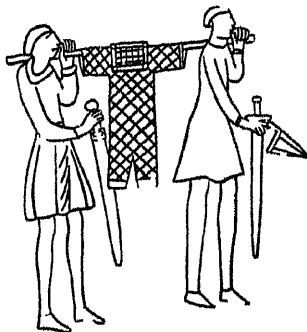
PART THREE

CHAPTER II

WILLIAM AND THE ENGLAND HE CONQUERED

AFTER his victory at Hastings Duke William led his army 1066 cautiously towards London

Meantime the Witan—the Anglo-Saxon council of elders—chose Edgar Aetheling as the new king William, having burnt Southwark, decided to draw off his army and not actually to attack London itself, but to await events at Berkhamstead The Saxons were quarrelling One group wanted to fight for Edgar Aetheling, Edward the Confessor's nephew Another wanted to come to terms with Duke William, as their fathers had done with another foreign king, Canute Other Saxon lords—particularly those from the North—



SOLDIERS CARRYING ARMOUR
AND WEAPONS TO BE LOADED
INTO BOATS FOR INVADING
ENGLAND

The front man carries a helmet

simply wanted to go home and defend their own estates William, who was strongly encamped, decided to wait and see what came of all this As he waited, a deputation with Edgar Aetheling at its head came and offered

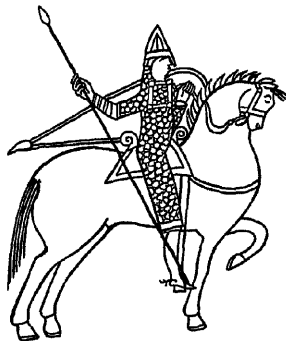
Crown
offered to
William

him the crown William at once accepted it and began to advance towards London, laying waste the villages as he passed through There was for the time no more resistance and on Christmas Day 1066 William was

William I
crowned

crowned at Westminster

His coronation took place less than three months after the victory at Hastings, but it took him more than five years to get command of the country First of all, various



NORMAN KNIGHT

Armour made of metal plates riveted on leather with hood complete The helmet is separate Stirrups were just coming into use in Europe

parts of the North rebelled against him, then Cornwall, Devon, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Cheshire, Yorkshire, Northumberland and the Fens all rose at different times But it was in vain that they tried to get rid of him William was a great fighter and a terrible enemy A historian who lived in Durham tells the story of how he dealt with the revolt in the North

When King William heard the news he at once gathered an army and hastened to Northumberland with exasperation at heart, and all the winter

without ceasing laid waste the country and so great a famine prevailed that men compelled by hunger ate human flesh, and horses, dogs and cats, and anything whatsoever that is loathsome, some sold themselves into perpetual slavery, so long as they could somehow support a miserable existence, others leaving the country as exiles, gave up the ghost in the middle of their journey And so for nine years the land was destitute of tillers, and far and wide there extended a barren waste Between York and Durham never a town was inhabited, there were only dens of wild beasts and robbers to terrify the heart of travellers,

William
crushes
rebellion

Men broken like that do not often rebel twice, and where he was less cruel William strengthened his position by building strong castles. The best known of these, ^{Castles} the Tower of London, was of stone, but most of them ^{Tower of London} consisted only of earthworks and a wooden watch-tower.

What we call 'The Norman Conquest' did not, of course, simply mean that William ruled instead of Harold. In order to conquer England William had had to collect an army and he had got together men from many parts of France and even from Italy by promising them land and other rewards if he won. So after Hastings and the various rebellions against him, he took the lands of the English leaders and shared them among his ^{William gives} followers. In the same way the best posts in the English ^{estates to his} Church were given to foreign priests and bishops. On the whole the change was probably an improvement. It meant suffering for the English nobles who lost their estates, and perhaps some of the peasants found their rents and duties increased and their liberties cut down. But the Norman kings were abler, and the Norman ^{Normans} churchmen more civilized than the Anglo-Saxons, and ^{more} under their rule England began to share more fully in ^{civilized} the learning and fashions and trade of Europe.

II

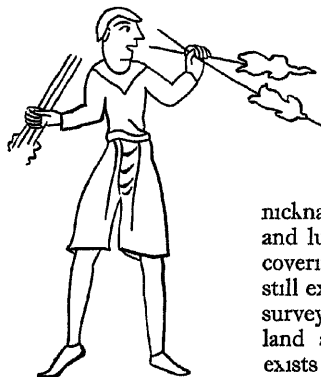
What sort of country was Norman England? Fortunately for historians William himself asked that question, for he wanted to find out what his new conquest was worth. The writer of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, who was rather shocked by his business-like methods, tells us how he set about it. ^{Much is known about Norman England}

The King held his Great Council, and had deep speech with his nobles about this land, as to how and by what manner of men it was inhabited. He sent, therefore, into every county ^{Domesday Book} throughout the whole of England ministers of his with orders to find out how many hundred hides¹ there were in each county, planned and how much land and cattle the King himself had in that

¹ A hide was about 120 acres

county, and how much in annual revenue he ought to enjoy from that county. He ordered also to be entered the quantity of land held by his archbishops, bishops, abbots and eails, and, to be brief, what and how much each person who had lands in the English nation possessed, whether in lands or cattle, and how much it was worth in money. So diligently did he have the land surveyed that not a single hide of land, and not even (though it is a shame to say what he thought it

no shame to do) a single ox or cow or pig, was omitted and not returned in the reckoning, and all these writings were afterwards brought to him.



A SERVITOR

He is handing roast chickens on spits straight to the banqueting tables, in William's Camp in England. Notice his wide short trousers as a contrast to the Anglo-Saxon tunics.

The book that was made from 'these writings' soon came to be nicknamed Domesday Book, and luckily two volumes of it, covering most of the country, still exist. It gives us a 'social survey'—a stock-taking of the land and its people—such as exists in the early history of no other country. There are many things that it does not tell us, such as what people ate and wore and thought. But, with other records to help, it is possible to get a fair idea of what England was like.

One thing is quite clear. Towns were few and small and

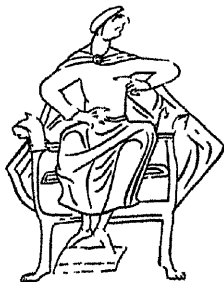
Hardly any towns

the great majority of people earned their living by farming. Of the 283,242 men mentioned in Domesday Book (women and children were not counted) 232,921 were peasants. But in many ways they differed from modern farm workers. Methods of growing crops and raising animals were not nearly as good as those of to-day. In fact, they had scarcely improved at all for

the last two hundred years, and at the time of the Norman Conquest peasants farmed much as they had in the time of King Alfred (The pictures on this page and on pages 1, 2 and 11 will give the reader an idea of what people looked like and what tools they used)

In most parts of the country separate fields enclosed by hedges or walls were still unknown. The peasant still grew his crops on small, unenclosed strips of land, scattered among the strips of his lord and his neighbours. His pigs and cattle, in charge of a swinherd or a neat-herd, wandered with those of his neighbours and fed on the waste ground about the village, on the common pastures, or on the stubble after harvest. Crops were poor, and the yield of corn for each acre seems to have been less than a quarter of what it is to-day. The pigs, horses, sheep and cows would seem to us funny rough little things, all skin and bone and very much smaller than the animals we are used to.

The farmers of Norman England did not pay all their rents in money, as they would to-day. Instead, they paid them partly in the form of eggs and chickens and other produce, partly by working on their lord's land without wages. Most of them worked for two or three days a week during most of the year and extra at harvest time. Nor is this very difficult to understand. Nearly every man had a few acres to farm for himself, and it is possible that the lord would not have been able to get enough labour to cultivate his strips and tend his flocks simply by offering wages for work. He certainly would not have been able to get it easily at harvest time, when everyone was busy. But by demanding his rent in the



A NORMAN NOBLE

Notice the line chain with
beasts' heads

Rent paid in
work or
produce

Silver Money form of work he got round these difficulties And in any case there was probably not enough coin in the country for all rents to be paid in cash, for the Normans had neither paper nor copper money, and the peasants were too poor to use much silver

What seems even more strange is the fact that most of the people in England were not legally free Doomsday Book mentions only a few actual slaves, but of the 232,921 peasants only 36,513 were free men The others—that is to say the great majority of all the people living in England at the time—were what are known as villeins or serfs and lacked many of the liberties of freemen Neither they nor their children, for example, could leave the village without the lord's permission When the reader remembers that there were more people belonging to the class of serf than belonging to all the other classes put together it becomes clear that the ordinary man in William's England had a lean time His house was usually only a single room built of wattle, straw and mud, with one end partitioned off for cattle—(this is how many peasants in Poland and Hungary, for instance, live to this day) His village was often separated from the next by miles of forest, waste and moorland, many men spent their whole lives without seeing more than two hundred different people Everyone had to pay a tithe (a tenth) of his income to the Church To make matters worse, William declared one-third of the country to be 'forest', where only he and his friends might hunt. These 'forests' often included cultivated land, but however much damage the game did to his crops the peasant was not allowed to injure it Under the Conqueror the man caught going after deer had his hand cut off or was blinded Under William's sons the penalty was death

Most of the
people were
Villeins or
Serfs

Poor Man's
House

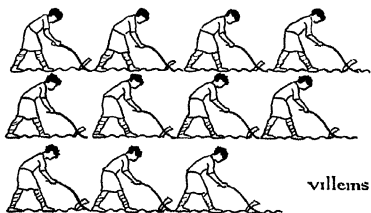
Small
Village

'Forest'



Nobles
knights
barons
church
men
etc

PEASANTS



villeins



cotters



freeholders

Table shewing
approximate
proportion,
according to
Doomsday
Book, of
peasants to
other ranks
(adult male)

Neither villeins nor cotters were free men, but a villein held rather more land than a cotter

CHAPTER 12

KING, NOBLES, CHURCH—THE DEATH OF WILLIAM

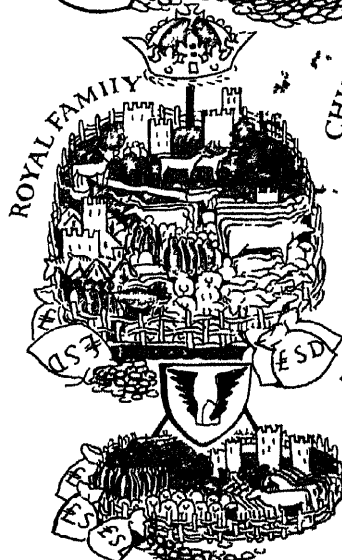
Who got the
rents ?

If the reader looks at the picture-chart on page 9 he will see who got the rents that the peasants had to pay, and, roughly, who got the largest share. In considering these few rich people it must not be forgotten that, rich as they were, they led lives that would seem hard to us to-day. Very few of them undressed at night, for instance, or had proper beds to sleep in, or glass in their windows, or convenient means of washing in their manors and castles. Very few of them could read or write. However, they had a much better time than the peasants.

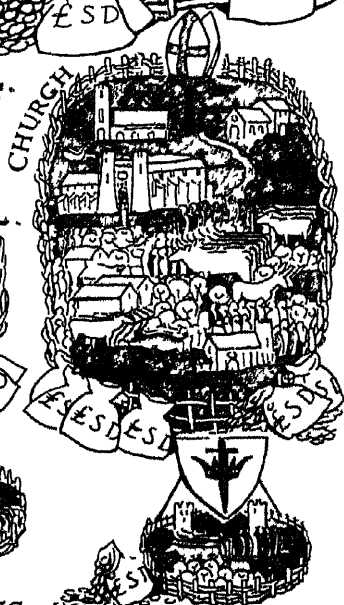
Looking at the chart it becomes clear that his conquest of England had been very profitable to William and his family. It was also profitable to his followers, who, as the chart shows, had managed to get nearly all the lands away from the old Anglo-Saxon nobles.

Why did the
Barons let
the King
rule ?

A comparison of the shares held by the King and the barons suggests an interesting question. Since political power usually goes with wealth, why is it that we find England being ruled by the King, when, rich as he is, the barons are much richer ? This is a very important question, for a great deal of English history during the Middle Ages consists of the story of a struggle between King and barons for the control of the government. The reader must remember that the King and the barons were all great landowners so that their interests were often the same, and on many things they agreed. But



ANGLO-SAXON BARONS



ROYAL OFFICERS

III DIVISION OF LAND AMONG WILLIAM'S NOBLES

sometimes they quarrelled, and it will be well to remember certain things if we want to understand why the King usually won

For one thing, the barons often disagreed among themselves. When they were really united they could usually get their own way, so it became part of royal policy to encourage disagreements. Also the estates of each baron were usually scattered. William did not conquer all England at once, so he rewarded his followers by instalments. As each new district was subdued it was divided up among the invaders until, at the end, the leading Normans found themselves with big estates that were made up of separate manors scattered all over the country. Each baron had many fighting men who would follow him, but he could not easily get them all together. This was one reason why Norman barons proved decidedly less dangerous to the kings than the old Anglo-Saxon earls. Only on the borders of Wales and Scotland, where strong barons were needed to keep back 'the savages', was one man ever given a big block of land.

Finally, the King could sometimes appeal to the fighting men who were below the great nobles. Obviously a baron, however rich he was, was only one man, and when it came to fighting his importance depended upon the number of men who followed him. These had, of course, to be paid, and he usually paid the most important of these knights by making them his 'mesne' or middle tenants—so called because they came in the middle between him and his serfs. Each mesne tenant would be given one or more manors, complete with serfs, and in return would have to fight for the baron and attend his court, just as the baron himself attended the King's Court and fought for him. For it must be remembered that, although the great nobles were so rich, the King was the landlord of them all, they were called his vassals and they held their estates in return for attending

¹ Pronounced 'mean' a word still used for 'middle' in the phrase 'The happy mean'.

his Court and for fighting for him with their followers
 Feudal Oath Each baron had to swear to be true to the King. He knelt before him, laid his hands between the King's hands and swore 'to be his man'. In turn, each of the baron's fighting tenants swore to be true to the baron and to obey him as overlord.

But if King and Baron quarrelled, Now it is quite easy to see that this arrangement had a drawback from the King's point of view. It was, of course, important that the barons should have these mesne tenants. Otherwise they might not be able to provide enough knights when he summoned them to his army. But the danger had to be faced that the baron might use his knights to fight not *for* but *against* the King. Every king, therefore, argued that a mesne tenant's duty to him as king was definitely greater than his duty to his own overlord. On one occasion William went so far as to make many of these knights take a definite oath of fealty to him. In 1086 William had to go to Normandy, and was afraid that a rebellion might break out while he was away. So he summoned to Salisbury not only his barons, but also their chief followers, and took from them all an oath 'to be faithful to him against all other men'.

Oath of
Salisbury,
1086

II

The Church Look at the chart on page 9 again, and you will see there was another body of people who were rich and powerful. In fact the Church was even more powerful than its wealth suggests. Besides rents, the Church took a tenth of everyone's crops, and new-born animals. Every man and woman was considered to be a son or daughter of the Church, and if he or she disobeyed its orders could be punished by being given a penance to do, or even by excommunication. Excommunication was a very serious punishment indeed. As long as a man was under that sentence no priest might marry him, allow him to hear Mass, or give his body Christian burial.

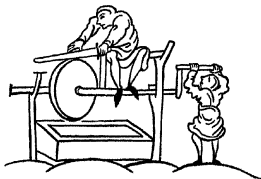
Tithes

Penance

Excommuni-
cation

In some things the Church claimed to be quite independent of the King

Its arguments were perfectly simple. Its business, it said, was with spiritual things, which were the most important things, and in which it held its authority direct from God. In these matters, neither king nor noble had any right to interfere. In practice, this meant two things. First, that priests were privileged persons who could be appointed to their offices and punished for their crimes only by the Church. Second, that for 'spiritual' Church claims to be independent



A GRINDSTONE. I ADWIN'S PSALTER, 14TH CENTURY

The monks often used to decorate their church books with pictures of everyday objects and life. This is very primitive, rather like the work of a very small child, but the art of drawing was not yet well understood.

offences, such as immorality or blasphemy, all men, whether priests or not, were punished by the Church and not by the ordinary justices. The Church had its own courts and its own body of law—the Canon Law—for settling such questions. There was a time, as we shall see, when the Pope even went so far as to depose the King. Church Law

To the men of Norman England these claims did not sound strange, as they may to-day. As we have said, they were all Catholics. Moreover, the leaders of the Church were actually often the best-educated and wisest

These claims
might lead to
quarrels

men of the time, trials in Church courts were fairer than those elsewhere, and Canon Law was better than the ordinary Common Law. But it is easy to see that the great power and claims of the Church would often lead to quarrels with the King. William and Lanfranc, the Archbishop of Canterbury, were good friends and could work together. They agreed that the clergy should have their separate courts, instead of carrying on in the old Anglo-Saxon manner in which the bishop and sheriff had sat together and heard all sorts of cases in the same court. William refused to make any more concessions and Lanfranc did not insist. But after they were both dead things, as we shall see, went less smoothly.

III

William dies
1087

The writer of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* for 1087 has left a very good character sketch of William the Conqueror, who was killed fighting abroad in that year.

Character
sketch of
William

If any person wishes to know what kind of man he was—then will we write about him just as we have found him. This King William, then, was a very wise man and very rich, more splendid and powerful than any of his ancestors were. He was mild to the good men that loved God, and beyond all measure severe to the men that gainsaid his will. So very stern was he, and hot, that no man durst do anything against his will. He had earls in his custody who acted against his will. Bishops he hurled from their bishoprics and abbots from their abbeys, and thegns he put in prison. But amongst other things is not to be forgotten that good peace that he made in this land so that a man of any account might go over his kingdom unhurt with his bosom full of gold. No man durst slay another had he never so much evil done to the other—Assuredly in his time had men much distress and very many sorrows. Castles he let men build and miserably oppressed the poor. The King himself was so very rigid and extorted from his subjects many marks of gold, and many hundred pounds of silver, which he took of his people for little need, by right and unright. He was fallen into covetousness and greediness he loved withal. He made many decrees, and he established laws therewith so that whosoever slew a hart or a hind should be deprived of his eyesight, for

he loved the tall deer as if he were their father. Likewise he decreed respecting the hares that they should go free. His rich men bemoaned it, and the poor men shuddered at it. But he was so stern that he recked not the hatred of them all, for they must follow withal the king's will if they would live and have land, or possessions or even peace.

CHAPTER 13

THE CONQUEROR'S SUCCESSORS AND THE FIRST CRUSADE

1087 THE Council was not consulted as to who was to be
King the next king William the Conqueror left England in
William's his will to his second son William as if it had been a
will house and garden His Dukedom of Normandy he left
to his eldest son Robert, and his youngest, Henry, got
nothing Robert had expected to get both dukedom and
kingdom, and was furious

William The new King of England was called William Rufus—
Rufus William the Red—not because of his hair but because
of his face According to the chroniclers, he had only
one virtue—he was brave The chroniclers—who were
monks and priests—disliked him so much partly because,
being always in want of money, he had a habit of
cheating the Church For instance, if a bishop or an
How Rufus abbot died, William would wait for months or years be-
cheated the fore appointing a new one, in the meantime collecting
Church and spending the revenue of the abbey or the bishopric
himself

Anselm The Archbishop of Canterbury, Anselm, remonstrated
strongly with him The King threatened his life, and
Anselm fled out of England This quarrel was thought
very shocking because Anselm was a man with a great
reputation for saintliness A pleasant story of what he
said to a schoolmaster who beat his scholars has been
reported by the chroniclers 'Force your scholars to
improve' said Anselm 'Did you ever see a craftsman
fashion a fair image out of a golden plate by blows

alone? Does he not now gently press it and strike it with his tools, now with his wise art yet more gently raise and shape it? What do your scholars turn into under this ceaseless beating?' 'They turn out only brutal,' was the reply 'You have bad luck,' said Anselm, 'in a training that only turns men into beasts!'

The nobles disliked William Rufus because he was very strict and dishonest about getting in his feudal dues. Within a year of his coming to the throne he had become so unpopular with the Church and the barons that there was a rebellion against him, which was helped both by Robert and by the King of Scotland. But the poorer people stood by him, and the rebellion was defeated. And now William's brother, Robert, made him what seems a very strange offer. If, said Robert, William would lend him 10,000 marks to go to Jerusalem on a Crusade, William could have his Duchy of Normandy while he was away - and indeed until Robert paid him back. Why did Robert want to go to Jerusalem?

Against
beating
school
children

Barons also
dislike Rufus



Robert
pawns his
Duke dom

II

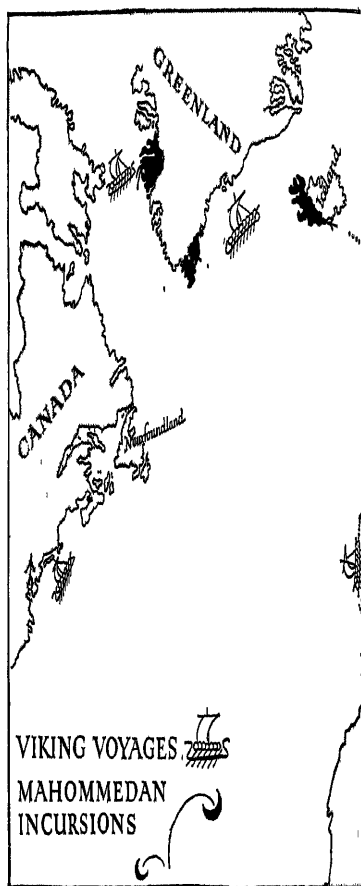
The reader who has seen Volume I of this story may remember that at the end of Chapter 5 there is a piece of information that seemed to have very little to do with English history. It is that more than four hundred and fifty years before the reign of William Rufus a certain Arab named Mohammed declared that he and no other was the true prophet of God. Gradually his fellow-countrymen were persuaded to believe him, and, before he died, the Arabs became a strong and united nation under his leadership. Later the armies of Islam as the

SARACEN (III)

Moors wear such tur-
bans to-day

1095
The First
Crusade

Mohammed



This map shows the movements of Northern and Eastern races

during about 200 years. They overlapped both in time and place

Moslems
almost over-
run Europe

Mohammedan armies were called—conquered Syria, Egypt, Persia, North Africa, Spain and parts of Turkestan and India, and threatened to conquer all Europe. Then, in the early eighth century, their advance had been stopped and for the next three hundred years the Christians and Mohammedans faced each other across the Mediterranean. Although their religions were different, for most of that time they managed to live at peace. The Moslems do not seem to have come to northern Europe much. But many Christians made pilgrimages to Jerusalem and the merchants of Constantinople and Italy traded regularly to Syria and Egypt for the silks, spices, drugs, dyes and jewels of the East.

The Pope
declares war
1095

At the time we have reached the Christians had begun to drive the Moslems slowly back—out of Spain for instance. Then a civil war among the Moslems themselves brought to the top a warlike group who tried to prevent Christian pilgrims and merchants from coming into their territory and began to attack the dominions of the Christian Emperor of Constantinople. The Emperor appealed to his fellow-Christians for help. The Pope, Urban II, decided to declare a Crusade—a 'holy war'. In November 1095 in the south of France, he preached a solemn sermon before a great gathering of nobles and Churchmen. He said that it was the duty of Christians to free the holy places, and that every man who vowed to 'take the cross' and become a 'Crusader' would have his debts in this world, and his sins in the next, forgiven. If he died in that war he would die in the certainty of waking in Heaven. No sooner was this sermon finished than all the listeners shouted 'God wills it!' 'Deus vult!' Thousands there and then took the cross and priests went up and down in every country—even as far as Wales—preaching the Crusades.

It used to be thought that the only reason for the Crusades was this religious feeling and this promise of eternal happiness. But as Mr Ernest Baker (among

- other modern historians) shows, many of the Crusaders had other motives. Some of the princes who 'took the cross' were feudal nobles who were like their ancestors, the Vikings, whose only trade was fighting. They were short of money to pay their followers and had already taken all they could get from their serfs. Some of the churchmen who preached the Crusades were sincerely anxious to do good, and their idea of doing good was to get these useless fighting men away out of Europe. Some of the merchants who gave money to the holy cause gave it because they wanted to keep the trade that had made them rich, and which was now threatened by the armies of Islam. Then there were many desperate men of all sorts—monks who had run away from their monasteries, escaped villeins, and homeless men flying from a dreadful sickness that was raging over half Europe. It was a movement not altogether unlike a gold or an oil rush.

All sorts of people went on Crusades

Adventure

Trade

Desperate Men

But there is no doubt that some Crusaders did honestly believe that they were fighting God's wars and attacking wicked, barbarous infidels, though the Mohammedans were really rather more civilized than they were. In spite of much hardship, fierce resistance from the Mohammedans, quarrels, cheating and delays, the Crusaders actually did on July 15th, 1099, capture Jerusalem. They left a Christian prince and a garrison to guard it, and a large number of merchants to develop the Eastern trade, and then most of the Crusaders turned home again.

A Heavenly Kingdom

Jerusalem captured 1099

III

Robert of Normandy was among those who started for home. As he got nearer to his pawned dukedom he began to ask what news there was of his brothers William and Henry. It was not long before he heard what had happened. William Rufus had been mysteriously killed by an arrow while he was hunting in the New Forest, no one knew whether by accident or on purpose. Henry, the youngest of the three brothers, had seized his oppor-

What had been going on in England?

tunity and had himself made both King of England and
 1100 Duke of Normandy For the next five years the brothers
 fought, sometimes in Normandy, and sometimes in
 England, but at last Henry I took Robert prisoner

Henry I On the whole Henry I ruled England well He revived
 some of the best of the old Anglo-Saxon laws, made
 peace with Archbishop Anselm and the Church, and for



HENRY I DREAMS THAT THREATENING PEASANTS HAUNT HIM
 ASKING HIM TO SIGN A CHARTER

Notice their tools and the hat worn by the older man
 This is an early 'political cartoon'

Better
 government

fifteen or sixteen years managed to keep peace among
 the barons Henry knew very well that his whole rather
 simple system of government depended on there being
 a vigorous king on the throne who would be able to
 prevent either Church or barons upsetting the balance
 of power However, he had good hopes for the future
 because he had a son, William the Ethling, who through
 his mother was descended from the old Saxon royal

family The story of what happened gives a dramatic picture of the life of the time

In 1120 Henry and this son and a large company of 1120 nobles had been attending to affairs in Normandy At Harfleur a large fleet was collected to carry them back to England On the morning when they were to embark a certain sea captain had audience of the King and told him that he was the son of that very captain on whose ship William the Conqueror, Henry's father, had sailed for England Would the King honour him by crossing in his fine and well-appointed 'White Ship'? The King had already made his arrangements and must sail at once, but promised that his son William Ethling should sail in her The captain and crew were delighted at the honour Perhaps the young prince would stand them a drink or two to celebrate the occasion? The prince, who was himself a great drinker, at once agreed When the King and the rest of the fleet sailed the drinking was at its height on the White Ship Sailors, rowers, the bodyguard of soldiers, most of the passengers, the captain, and even the pilot were all drunk, and laughed away the priests who came to bless the voyage The only sober passengers were horrified, and refused to sail in her Late at night the White Ship set out with three hundred souls on board Soon she was clean out of her course, and, on a fine calm night, by the light of a full moon that drunken rabble ran their ship full tilt on a rock She filled and sank at once The story goes that after he had heard this tale Henry never smiled again

The White Ship

Too drunk to be afraid

The disaster was so great from Henry's point of view because the Normans did not follow the old Saxon custom by which the new King was chosen by the Council from among the royal family When a king died without a grown and capable son to succeed him there was always danger For the next fifteen years Henry I kept the peace, but when he died, and was to have been succeeded by his daughter Matilda, civil war

Why the King was so unhappy

Henry I dies 1135

Stephen and Matilda broke out at once Against her the nobles put up Stephen, Count of Blois, who was a grandson of William the Conqueror through a daughter The King of Scotland joined in (for Matilda), the Church at first fought on Stephen's side, and many of the barons fought first on one side and then on the other—just as it suited them This civil war lasted for nineteen years and was a time of misery that was long remembered There is a well-known passage in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* which describes the state of England

Civil War



COSTUME OF
A LADY

The face of this statue has been badly damaged, but the figure still shows the long 'pig tails' wound with silk or wool, and her long trailing robe and mantle. The sleeves would be lined with another colour, or fur

The mighty men filled the land full of castles. They cruelly oppressed the wretched men of the land with castle-works. When the castles were made they filled them with devils and evil men. Then they took those men whom they deemed to have any possessions, husbandmen and women, and put them in prison for gold and silver and tortured them with unspeakable torture. They put them in dungeons in which there were adders and snakes and toads. They laid taxes on towns, and when the wretched men had no more to give they robbed and burned all the towns, so thou mightest well go all a day's journey and thou wouldst never find a man settled in a town, nor the land tilled. Then corn was dear, and meat and cheese and butter, for there was none in the land.

It seemed as if there might be no end to such civil wars, for Stephen and Matilda both had sons. It was lucky for England that Stephen's son died, for the two sides then came to terms—Stephen was to be king for the rest of his life, but Matilda's son, Henry, was to be king after him.

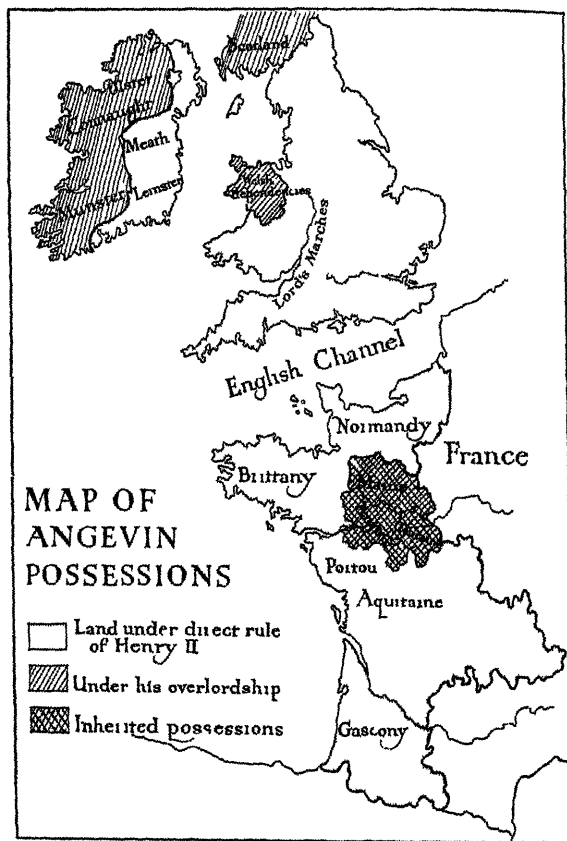
CHAPTER 14

HENRY II—THE THIRD CRUSADE --JOHN

HENRY II was cruel, energetic and able, had a violent Henry II temper, and when he became King of England had ¹¹⁵⁴ already had a good deal of experience in the arts that were needed in ruling feudal nobles. He had no intention of letting the barons in England rebel against him as he had rebelled against his own overlord the King of France.

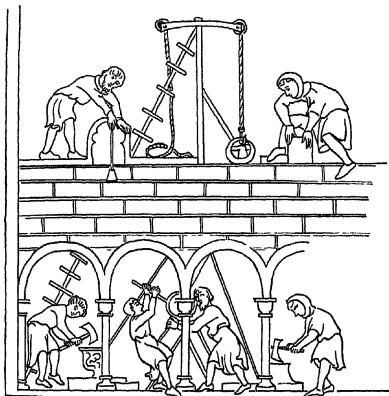
As soon as he became king he went on with the work of William the Conqueror and of Henry I that is he began to build a system of government that really ^{A strong central government} worked. He saw quite clearly that it was not enough to have a strong and able king. Life in England was becoming more complicated, and even in Anglo-Saxon times it had never worked when one man tried to rule the whole kingdom. Besides, Henry meant to govern not only England but half of France (see map, page 24). This meant that he would have to spend a great deal of his time abroad, so for England he needed a system that would work even when the King was out of the country. So successful was he in building up a government that would run by itself that, as will be seen, Richard his son was able to spend practically his whole reign out of England without the government collapsing.

Henry began his work by sending away the Flemish soldiers whom Stephen had brought in, by pulling down any new castles that the barons had built without leave, and by getting back the royal castles that they had seized. Then, piece by piece, he repaired and improved the



This map shows the lands ruled, directly or indirectly, by Henry II. He inherited Maine, Touraine and Anjou from his father, Normandy from his mother and England, Wales and Ireland from Stephen. His wife brought him the rule of Poitou, Aquitaine and Gascony, and his son was married to the heiress of Brittany.

machinery of government. He collected round him a group of able officials to carry on the daily work—chiefly administering justice and collecting the royal revenues. And he chose most of these men, not from



BUILDERS AT WORK

Notice the primitive ladder. Compare the tools with those shown near the end of Vol. I.

among the barons, but from the townsmen, clergy and country gentry. Thomas à Becket, his chancellor, for example, was the son of a tradesman. They owed their importance, therefore, not to their own big estates but to the fact they were the King's servants. If he was not satisfied with their work he could—and did—get rid of them.

The King's
officials

Justice Henry had to do two main things. First of all he had to repair and improve the system of justice. The first business of any government is to maintain law and order, and to see that justice is done, but when Henry came to the throne he found that important business being done extremely badly. At the royal Court, which met wherever the King happened to be, and which tried the most important cases, there was usually great delay because the same court had to do many other kinds of work besides enforcing the law. And the local courts were even less satisfactory, they were also slow, they still used the old 'compurgation' and 'ordeal',¹ and many of them were under the control of the barons.

Judges go
'on circuit'

Now the central court was reorganized so that some of its members did nothing but administer justice, and in this way the work was done more quickly. More important even than this, royal judges were regularly sent round the country (as they still are to-day) to try all people accused of serious crimes, and to hear any cases about land that freemen cared to bring before them. And although people had to pay to have their cases tried by the royal judges, many of them proved willing to do so. For in the royal courts they got a fair and speedy trial, and a trial by jury in place of the delays and out-of-date methods of the shire and hundred courts. Through these courts there was gradually built up a uniform body of common law for the whole country.

Henry also wanted to weaken, as far as he could, the power of the barons and the Church, in order to prevent a repetition of the unruliness of Stephen's times. This was far more difficult than reforming the ordinary courts of law. If Henry attacked their privileges too fiercely

¹ That is to say, they did not settle cases by inquiring directly into the facts. Instead, they demanded that the accused person should prove his innocence by bringing people to swear that he was trustworthy (compurgation) or by successfully undergoing an 'ordeal' such as carrying a hot iron. If the injury did not heal well he was judged guilty.

there was a great danger that the barons would rebel, and that the Church would call on the Pope to help them. But he set to work to limit their powers by a number of different laws, some of which were also aimed at other things. For instance, the sending round of royal judges weakened the barons, in so far as it took cases from their courts. (If a case were tried in the baron's court, the baron got the fine; if it was tried in the King's court the money went to the Royal Exchequer.)

Another thing that Henry did was to make all sheriffs¹ give an account of their conduct, and he dismissed those who had used their power wrongly. This, of course, was done partly to relieve the people who had suffered. But it also weakened the barons, for many of the dismissed sheriffs had been either barons themselves or were the friends of barons. The men who took their place were the King's own servants, owing their position to him and obeying him alone.

In Anglo-Saxon times all freeholders had to keep weapons so that they could fight for the King in times of danger. But since the Conquest many had wiggled out of that obligation, and 'the fyrd', as this peasant army was called, was by now of little use. Henry set to work to strengthen it. He not only ordered that all freeholders

Keeping the
Barons in
order



Sheriffs

ANTIDIVINE LADY
Compare the dress
with that of a nun
today. The white
wrapping under her
clim is called a
wimple

The Fyrd

¹ 'Sheriff' is short for 'Shire Reeve'. There were other sorts of reeve such as 'Port Reeves'. A reeve was a man who acted for someone—the King or the lord of the manor. He was appointed by his master, not elected like a mayor or an alderman.

and townsmen should provide themselves with weapons, but he transferred the control of the fyrd from the nobles to the royal sheriffs and judges. He built up, that is, an army of ordinary men on which he could call in case either of foreign invasion, or of a revolt of the barons.

Scutage By often taking money (scutage or 'shield-money') instead of the actual military service which his vassals, the great nobles, owed him as the rent of their estates, Henry was able to hire soldiers to fight for him. This was useful in two ways. It meant that he got a better army of professional soldiers for his wars in France, and that his barons and their followers got less practice in fighting.

And now the Church To limit the power of the Church proved more difficult. For at that time the Popes were trying to do to the Church exactly what Henry was trying to do to his kingdom of England—that is, trying to bring everything under a well-organized central control. But in 1164 Henry issued the famous Constitutions of Clarendon, which, he said, contained the ancient law of the country about the relation of Church and State. He insisted that the Church should accept them.

Constitutions
of
Clarendon,
1164

II

We cannot be sure, but we may guess that the great majority of people benefited from Henry's rule. During the peace which he established the peasants must have found life easier and towns certainly grew. But both the Church and the barons were angry, for they saw that their privileges were in danger. And both caused trouble.

The first and most alarming resistance came from the Church, which was well organized and had a proud and resolute leader in Thomas à Becket. He had once been Henry's chancellor and great friend but, now that he was Archbishop of Canterbury, he was determined to defend the rights of the Church. Becket refused to agree to the Constitutions of Clarendon and, in particular, to the

Thomas à
Becket



INSIDE DURHAM CATHEDRAL

Notice the decorated Norman archway and the small interlacing arch on the wall beyond. The beautiful font cover belongs to the next or Gothic period.

Priests and laymen clause that said if a priest were found guilty of a crime by the Church court he should be dismissed from the priesthood and handed over to the ordinary courts to be punished as a layman. Over this point there arose a great struggle.

The King's argument The King argued that the punishments inflicted in the Church courts were so light that they were a danger to law and order. A priest who had committed a crime was simply made to do penance, or at worst, dismissed from his office for the Church refused to shed blood and had no prisons, or very few. This meant, said Henry, that any priest could commit robbery or murder at least once and get off with no worse penalty than losing his job. Only if he were 'unfrocked' for his first offence and then found guilty of another could he be punished as heavily as a layman—and laymen were punished very heavily indeed.

The Church's argument To this the Church's answer was simply that the penalty of unfrocking was in itself a terrible one, by it a man lost the enormous privilege of being a priest, and became just an ordinary layman. To punish him further in an ordinary court would be to punish him twice for the same offence.

Not decided on its merits The Pope might have been ready to come to terms with Henry, but Thomas à Becket was as obstinate and hot-tempered a man as the King. Now that he, Becket, was the head of the Church in England, the Church was not going to lose any of her privileges!

1170 The two men had a stormy scene, Becket fled out of England, and the dispute went on. The archbishop had to some extent put himself in the wrong and the Pope would not altogether support him. At last, however, after six years, Becket and the King met in France, had a sulkily sort of reconciliation, and Becket went back to Canterbury. When he got back, he began instantly to show that he meant to have his own way, in particular he disgraced two bishops whom he knew to be supporters of the King. Henry (away in France) was furious, and,



THE MURDER OF THOMAS A BECKET

This picture was made later than the actual event. Becket was really older. This is a very good example of the armour worn about 1340.

when he heard the news, cried out, in a rage, 'Aie there none of the dastards that eat my bread who will rid me of this turbulent priest?' Four knights who heard him took ship at once, went to Canterbury and murdered Becket as he stood in his vestments on the steps of the altar in Canterbury Cathedral (see picture on page 31)

The Murder

Now it was one of the most sacred rules of the time that in a church there should be no fighting or violence, and a consecrated bishop in his robes was sacred anywhere. It was no good for Henry to protest, after it was all over, that the knights had acted without his orders and that he knew nothing about the crime. Everybody was horrified. The Church immediately declared that Becket was not only a martyr, but instantly created him a saint, and the monks of Canterbury said that his dead body worked miracles, and encouraged people to make pilgrimages to Becket's tomb.

The consequence was that Henry had to give way on the whole Church question, do penance, and make his peace with the Pope as best he could. When the barons saw that Henry had been beaten in his quarrel with the Church they too began to give trouble. But unlike the churchmen, they were not organized, could not agree among themselves, and, above all, were not quite sure what it was that they wanted, so that they did not break into serious and open revolt for another generation.

III

The Third Crusade It was quite at the end of Henry II's reign, when he was fighting in France, that events happened that alarmed the Church and all the great men of Christendom.

The Mohammedans, led by a celebrated warrior—Saladin—reconquered the kingdom and city of Jerusalem.

1189 Henry was one of the kings who answered the Pope's call for a new crusade. He died before he could set out, leaving it as his last wish that his son and heir Richard should go in his place. Richard had spent his whole life fighting (often against his father), and was very ready

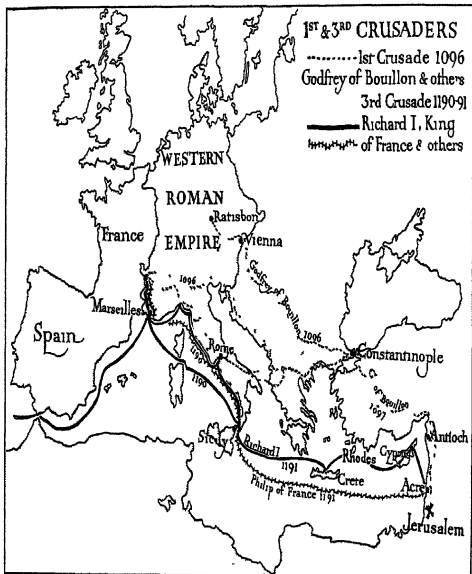
Richard becomes king

to set out on what seemed to the soldiers of that time the adventure of all adventures

The first thing that has to be done when someone decides to go adventuring is to raise money and afterwards to get together followers and equipment. Richard the Lion Heart (as he was called) set about the business in a way of which his father would not at all have approved. Both in England and in Normandy he put the highest offices up to auction. He sold charters to towns (this is explained in Chapter 15), sold royal lands, and collected all the feudal dues that he could lay hands on. He would have sold London, he said, if he could have found anyone rich enough to buy it!

When he had collected his cash, his stores, and his men, he set off to join the King of France, and the two kings and their armies spent the winter in Sicily (see map), while the Emperor of Germany, who had also taken the Crusader's Vow, set off overland. Richard and the French King had already been first allies and then enemies, and now spent most of their time quarrelling. When the spring came the French King sailed straight off to fight Saladin, but Richard decided to capture the island of Cyprus first. If you look at the map you will get an idea of how long these voyages were for a whole army and their horses and stores, and also that Richard's idea of capturing that island (which he sold afterwards for a large sum of money to another crusader) was a good one—Cyprus was a convenient place from which to attack the Mohammedans in Palestine. From there Richard and his English army went to help in the siege of Acre, and, largely through his energy, it was captured, whereupon the Christians beheaded three thousand Mohammedan prisoners. From Acre the Crusaders marched south towards Jerusalem, Saladin and his army making them fight every step of the way.

Saladin himself and Richard both gained tremendous reputations for bravery in battle. But though Richard 1191



Richard sailed from England, but we do not know at what ports he touched till he got to Marseilles

and the other Crusaders twice got in sight of Jerusalem, ^{Twice in sight of Jerusalem} the quarrels between the Christian princes, to whose help the Crusaders had come, and the quarrels between the Kings of France and England, prevented any real victory. The King of France sailed home, and Richard remained for another year, sometimes fighting, and sometimes trying to come to terms.



RICHARD COEUR DE LION

Notice his complete suit of chain armour



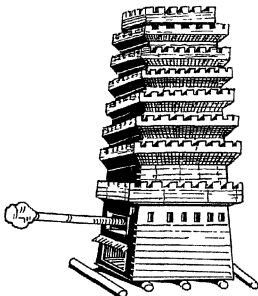
A SARACEN

The Saracen wears no armour

Later historians and people writing stories about the Long truce crusades sometimes write as if the Mohammedans and the Crusaders all thought each other extremely wicked. No doubt on both sides the most religious and earnest people did think so. But the fact is that in the course of their attempts to come to terms, there was a good deal of friendly talking and feasting. Richard at one point proposed that his sister Joanna should marry Saladin's brother, a strange marriage that did not actually take place. Finally, a treaty was made. Christian pilgrims were to be allowed to visit the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem, and

Christian princes and merchants were to keep a number of valuable ports on the coast

The trade part of the treaty was most important, for, as in the first crusade, it was for the sake of the valuable trade that many of the Crusaders were there, particularly



SIEGE TOWER

These were built of wood, with a heavy battering-ram in the lower story. Soldiers could shoot from the galleries. Italian cities sometimes hired these out to the Crusaders—but one was also built for Richard I. He himself helped to make it and called it 'Matte Griffin'. He took it with him to the siege of Acre.

The Italian cities the armies of the Italian merchant cities. The rulers of these cities often made very hard bargains with the other Crusaders. For instance, the Venetians, in return for helping in a certain siege, bargained that if the city was captured they should have a third of it, be allowed to set up baking ovens and baths, and have no more tolls to pay.

IV

On his way back to England Richard was shipwrecked. Richard tries to get home
 Trying to come back overland in disguise, he was captured by the Emperor of Germany, who had been his ally in Palestine, put in prison and held to ransom (this was against the rules, as Richard was a Crusader and might not be attacked by a brother Christian). The fact that Longchamp, who had been left as Richard's regent in England, was able to raise part of the ransom is a proof of how well Henry II's new machinery of government was working, especially as Richard's brother John had already begun to behave as if Richard were dead and he were king.

When Richard got back, he stayed in England only a few weeks, and five years afterwards died fighting in France 1194 1199

Of his ten years as king, Richard only spent ten months in England and only a year and four months in the Holy Land. During the rest of the time he was either fighting in France, or a prisoner of the Emperor of Germany. Since Richard the Lion Heart became a legend among the poets and singers of the next hundred years in France and England, it seems not unfair to think that he was a fair sample of their ideal of what a hero king should be. Was Richard a model king?
 But though he was brave and energetic, he certainly seems to have done very little to increase anyone's happiness, and his wars, and the enormous amount of money needed for them, certainly caused a terrible amount of death and poverty.

CHAPTER 15

MAGNA CARTA

John Nobody, however, approved of John, who had all Richard's
unpopular faults and none of his virtues, and it was while John was king that the barons at last made up their minds what to do and how—with the help of the Church—to do it. Not only did John carry on Henry's policy of strengthening the royal power, he was like William Rufus in using that power badly. He cruelly punished men without fair trial. He took money from his vassals to which he had no right. He appointed greedy and dishonest officials. And in various ways he made enemies of nearly all the important people in England.

1204 In 1204 he was, as usual, fighting in France, was
John loses defeated, and the French king conquered Normandy
Normandy This meant that the nobles—and there were many—who held lands both in France and England had to sacrifice one set of estates or the other. Those who stayed in England found themselves poorer and with more time to think about their English grievances.

The Church Nor did John do anything to keep the Church on his side. In fact, chiefly through his refusal for seven years to accept Stephen Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury,

Interdict the quarrel was more bitter than ever before. The whole country was for a year put under an Interdict by the

1208 Pope The Interdict forbade priests to open their churches for the usual services, and for all that time the church bells were silent. Children might be baptized in church, but the only other services that were allowed

had to be held in the churchyard, and the dead had to be buried outside in unconsecrated ground. Yet, terrible though the Church thought this punishment to be, it did not succeed. It did not even seem to make people dislike John much more than before. Moreover, the Interdict gave John a good excuse for taking the wealth of the Church.

Consequently in 1209 the Pope had to go one step further and excommunicate John. The Pope put a solemn curse upon him. He was declared to be the enemy of all Christians. They must not serve him, or obey him, or help him in his direst need. Some of his subjects did refuse to obey him, but most of them were too cautious to do anything. John had made himself very strong indeed, using all Henry's excellent machinery of government, but using it very harshly. 'All men bore witness,' says a writer of the time, 'that never since the time of Arthur¹ was there a king who was so greatly feared in England, in Wales, in Scotland, or in Ireland.'

Pope orders
Invasion
1213

Finally, in 1213, the Pope ordered King Philip of France to invade England and to turn John off the throne. This time John was beaten, for he could not trust the discontented barons to fight for him, and he had not enough hired troops of his own. He had to accept Langton as archbishop, allow back the monks and bishops whom he had sent into exile, and agree to hold England in future as a vassal of the Pope.

John gives
in to the
Church

He tries to
get back
Normandy

Now that he was at peace with the Church again, John made another effort to get back his lost French possessions. Once more he was beaten, and came back after two years to England to find that the barons had got a new leader and new allies. The leader was Stephen Langton, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the new allies were the Church, the 'middle' tenants (the knights living in their manors in the country) and the citizens of London.

¹ The reader will notice that Arthur is written about here as if he were a real person.

II

The barons laid their plans while John was away. Magna Carta. They and the archbishops and bishops, representatives of the towns to which Henry I and II had given Charters, all met. Stephen Langton read them the Charters of Henry I and they drew up a new Charter. Who drew it up?

The importance of Magna Carta—the Great Charter—Legend as it was called, later became as much of a legend as the wisdom and virtue of King Alfred, or the ‘strong government’ of King Arthur. English kings suspected of wanting to make themselves too powerful were often made to swear to it again. Four hundred years after John had sealed it, it was referred to as if it forbade the King to raise taxes without the consent of Parliament—actually it did nothing of the kind. But there was something in it, or something about the way it was drawn up, or about the people who drew it up or agreed to it, that caught people’s imagination. Copies made at the same time as the one the barons tried to force John to seal still exist. One can be seen at the British Museum, for instance. Copy at British Museum

Legal documents and charters sometimes tell, and sometimes give away, facts that cannot be found in the stories of the chroniclers. For that reason they are extremely useful to historians, though they have, of course, to be used carefully and sometimes taken with a grain of salt, for like the chroniclers, they do not always tell the truth.

Magna Carta was written in Latin and begins as follows. How it begins

John, by the Grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine and Count of Anjou, to the Archbishops, Bishops, Abbots, Earls, Barons, Justiciars, Foresters, Sheriffs, Stewards, Servants and to all his Bailiffs and loyal persons, Greeting!

Then followed the reasons for granting the Charter

For the salvation of our soul the honour of God, the advancement of Holy Church, and for the reform of our realm

Then come the names of the chief bishops and nobles by whose advice he was acting

This is followed by a declaration that John by his 'own pure and unconstrained will' grants freedom to the English Church and,

to all freemen of our Kingdom for ever, all the underwritten liberties to be had and held by them and their heirs

John does all he can to get out of it 'Pure and unconstrained will' is a touch that must have amused the men who drew up the Charter and put the words into John's mouth For, in fact, John did everything he could think of to get out of agreeing He called upon the Pope for help he said he was going on a Crusade (so that anyone forcing him to do anything he didn't want to do would come under the disapproval of the Church) He imported foreign soldiers to protect him all in vain The bishops and the barons were too much for him On June 15th, 1215, in a meadow by the Thames at Runnymede (near Windsor), King John was made to grant a charter which he hated so much that he chewed up straw and pieces of wood in his rage

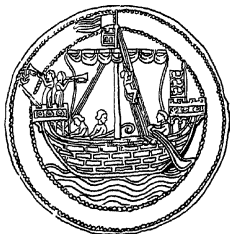
III

How important was it? How important was Magna Carta really? It is rather hard to say

At first sight, it seems that Magna Carta must have remedied the grievances of everybody, for it has clauses about all sorts of things rents, the rights of the Church, the repair of bridges, law courts, weights and measures But when we examine it more carefully we see that it was only the barons who really got much The King, it will be remembered, was the landlord of them all, and a large part of Magna Carta is taken up in settling exactly what payments and services John might take from them Since the time of Henry II the royal courts had slowly been taking cases away from the courts of the barons Magna Carta now put limits to this and Law courts further promised that each man should be tried by his

equals There is, however, one sentence that has a fine ring to it—'To no man will we sell, to no one will we refuse Right or Justice'

The greater barons were not, however, the only people who were against John and they were able to dictate to him only because they were supported by their own knights, by the townsmen and by the Church. So the Church and the City of London both had their privileges



A SHIP, 1284

This shows a square sail hoisted up. Notice the fore, and after castles, and the oar for steering, or 'steerboard'. The ship is made to look much too short so as to keep inside the design.

confirmed. The knights were promised that all the limits put on the King's power over the barons should in turn be put on the barons' power over them. Everybody benefited from the clauses against the misdoings of royal officials and against the extension of royal forests.

But what did most of the population of England get out of Magna Carta? The answer seems to be that they got very little. John says, 'We have granted to all freemen of our kingdom . . . all the underwritten

What lesser people got out of it

Did the liberties ' The villeins were certainly not free, so we
 villeins get must suppose that the liberties given in the Charter were
 anything? not meant to help them and no fresh limit was put on
 their lord's power of oppressing them

IV

When at last John had agreed, the barons and their
 followers must have hoped that their troubles were over
 But John seems never to have had any intention of keeping
 John asks the his promises, and even before he sealed the Charter he
 Pope for help had written to the Pope to have it cancelled In the
 autumn the Pope did indeed cancel it, and what was more,
 excommunicated the barons

The barons Then the barons turned to France for help, and offered
 invite the the English throne to Prince Louis, the French King's
 French in son Louis at once landed in England with an army,
 and there seemed a danger of a great civil war like that
 John dies between Stephen and Matilda eighty years before But
 1216 luckily, in 1216, John died (from overeating, said gossip)

Barons drive Most of the barons, therefore, went over to his side and
 out French turned against the French whom they had called in to
 help them, and in two desperate battles (at Lincoln and
 Dover) defeated their late allies and drove them back to

Henry III France For the next sixteen years—till the King,
 run by the Henry III, came of age—the barons managed to agree
 barons to act more or less together under one leader, and England
 was fairly peaceful

In the next chapter we shall describe some of the
 changes that had taken place in everyday life since the
 days when the Normans first came to England, and say
 something about the way in which ordinary people's
 work and play was carried on

CHAPTER 16

HOW PEOPLE LIVED—THE GROWTH OF TOWNS

(1150 TO ABOUT 1280)

A MODERN reader looking over the last four chapters might well ask a number of questions, for instance 'Where did towns and townsmen come in the Feudal



Eastern spices were brought to Europe by camel. This one is Persian

system?' 'Why was the spice trade so important?' 'Why was the The answer to this last question is long and unexpected, and has to be looked for in the history of farming, and sounds rather like 'The House that Jack Built'

The spice trade was so important because people had to eat dried or salted meat in the winter, and this was so high and nasty that everybody got spice if they could to make it bearable. People had only dried and salt meat in the winter because they had so little to feed their cattle on during the time when the grass does not grow. They had so little to feed their beasts on, because they did not understand growing turnips and swedes in their fields. So, the answer to the question, 'Why was the spice trade so important?' is 'Because there were no swedes.'

- Because there were no mangel-wurzels To-day farm stock get roots to eat all winter, but then turnips were grown only as a garden vegetable, mangels and swedes were not known, and not enough corn and hay could be grown to feed the cattle all the year. So only the cows that were wanted for breeding, and the plough and cart oxen were kept alive each winter.
- Farming and things to eat The rest of the cattle, and the pigs not wanted for breeding, were slaughtered about September and the meat was salted or smoked to make it keep, much as we cure bacon now. All through the winter there was no milk. Cows were very seldom milked from September to May, as there was so little to eat that they anyhow grew thin and weak. So butter, too, had to be salted. Sheep were kept chiefly for wool and for milk, which was made into cheese (as it is in Spain, Switzerland, Norway and other countries now). There were also pigeons, a few chickens, game, and wild rabbits. Transport was too slow for anyone who did not live quite near the sea to get any fresh sea fish, so river fish and eels were very much eaten. Vegetables, fresh eggs and fruit could not be had except in summer and there was, as a rule, no sugar to sweeten things, only honey. This meant that all through the winter and spring even the richest people had to live mostly on badly cured high meat, dried fish (it was famous for smelling disgusting), cheese, dried peas and beans, and different sorts of bread. There was, of course, no rice, tapioca, tea, coffee, cocoa, or sweets.
- No sweets

It is no wonder that anyone who could afford to would pay a high price for spices—ginger, cloves, mace, pepper, Spices cinnamon, nutmeg and allspice, curry spices—and other strong things that disguised the fact that the meat was so unpleasant

Everyone, rich and poor, drank ale, perry (made of Ale and pears) and cider The ale was brewed as it was wanted, cider for no hops were yet grown, so that it would not keep for long White bread made of wheat was a luxury, and poor people mostly ate oatcake or rye-bread (as they do in Poland, Hungary and many other parts of Europe now) Sometimes bean or pea flour was mixed with the wheat to make the bread heavier

Many kinds of herbs were either grown or gathered wild and dried In the gardens, besides the herbs for flavouring or medicine, were grown cabbages, onions, turnips, leeks, spinach and carrots Potatoes were not brought into Europe from America till four hundred years later, and strawberries and raspberries, though the wild kind were of course eaten, had not yet been cultivated.

Butter was not made in a revolving churn as it is now, Churns but by working a plunger rather like a washing-dolly up and down (see the picture on this page) Cooking was done on an open fire Meat and poultry were generally cooked on a spit (see picture on page 4), porridge and pease puddings were boiled in big iron pots Poor



COUNTRY WOMAN CHURNING.
Notice that her dress is pinned up
to keep it out of the mud

Bread

Herbs

No potatoes

Cooking

Wooden people used wooden spoons, plates and bowls, richer
spoons people had such things made of silver or pewter

II

Clothes Poor people dressed in woollen, with a linen shirt or chemise underneath The women spun the thread with a distaff (see picture on this page) Spinning-wheels, which were great labour-savers, had not yet come into



A LADY SPINNING

use here Out of doors the men very often wore sheepskin coats, or tunics made of leather, with hats made of rabbit skin The women wore either a linen wimple (picture of a wimple on page 27) and a hood over it, or sometimes a sort of shawl (see picture, page 51) People did not undress at night, though about 1250 the fashion came in among the richer, more fashionable people of sleeping undressed in a real bed between sheets

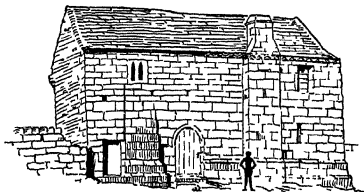
The richer people were accused of having hot baths occasionally This was considered a wicked habit learned from the heathen Mohammedans The grandest bath in England must have simply been a wooden tub No one remembered the Roman habit of having plenty of water and hot baths

III

Houses A villen's house generally had only one room and was very much like what a house had been in Saxon

times The windows were protected not with glass, but either with coarse sackcloth, or with a wooden lattice work, or sometimes with thin layers of horn Window glass was used only in great men's houses or in churches 'I shall bring my own window' It was so valuable and so much liked that great people, when they moved about, often took their windows with them

In manor houses, where a knight or a 'middle tenant' would live, there were generally several rooms The biggest was the great hall, a big room with a roof like a barn and an open fireplace Here the lord and lady of the manor



PADLEY HALL, DERBYSHIRE

the manor and their children and servants all ate The trestle tables and benches were moved aside at night and the servants slept on the floor which was strewn with rushes The women of the house generally slept and did their spinning and needlework in another room called the bower It is sad to think that, though it had such a nice name, it had no fireplace as a rule There was also sometimes a separate kitchen and a 'spence', or 'buttery'—a big larder for storing food and milk Some of the larger manor houses had two storeys Padley Hall in Derbyshire (see picture on this page), for instance, had a big hall and buttery on the ground floor, and over them a bower and a chapel The chapel was used as a sitting-

room as well as for holding services, and like the hall it had a big fireplace. The lord of the manor did his accounts there, and if the place was crowded (perhaps for a big hunt) people slept on the rushes on its floor.



GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL

IV

Churches
and Chapels

A new style of architecture had begun to come in, and any new church that was built, or any old church that was added to or repaired, now had the new pointed Gothic arches. It was, however, not till a little later that the most beautiful kind of Gothic was built in England. But if you compare the pictures on pages 25, 29 and 50 you will see that the new fashionable style was quite different to the Norman way of building.

Churches at this time were used for many purposes

besides the holding of services. In old St Paul's in London lawyers walked up and down the nave of the cathedral and were consulted there by people who had lawsuits to bring. In Dover the mayor was usually elected at a meeting held in St Peter's Church, while in Southampton merchants stored grain and wool in the nave.

In 1268 a general order was made forbidding people to set out stalls for selling their goods inside churches. Later an effort was made to stop the banqueting and drinking that went on in Exeter Cathedral. 'Common plays' were not to be acted in churches (at any rate while services were going on), but Miracle and Mystery plays were encouraged by the clergy (for explanation of these names see Chapter 21). In time of war, look-out men were posted on the church towers, and church and monastery bells were used to give warning and to mark the time, as well as to summon people to Mass.



MILKMAIDS COMING TO TOWN

V

Though most people still lived by farming, towns were growing and, as has been seen in the story of Magna Carta, their citizens were beginning to play a part in what was going on. Though the early Anglo-Saxons

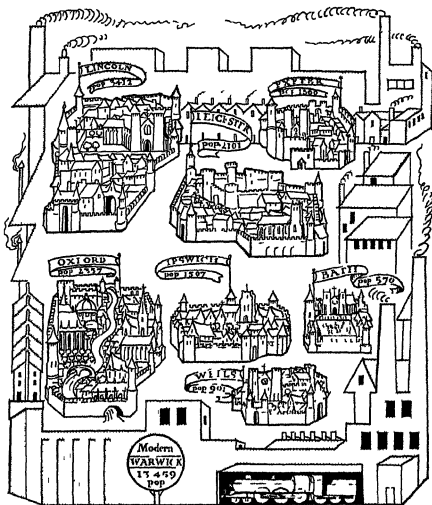
Towns
An answer to
that second
question

Where Towns grew up nearly always lived in villages and left the Roman-British towns to fall into ruins, small towns did begin to grow up even before the Norman Conquest. Some of these were on the old Roman sites—London and Colchester, for example. Others gradually grew up where there was a bridge or a ford over a river—*Oxford* and *Cambridge*—others on the sea where there was a harbour for ships—Yarmouth or Southampton. Still other towns grew up round a castle, a cathedral, or a monastery—Winchester, Durham, and Bury are such towns. By the time *Domesday Book* was compiled there were over ninety towns in England, many of which had walls. The picture-chart on the opposite page shows how small these were even in 1377.

Whom was a Town to belong to? Now we really know very little about the early history of these places, but it is easy to see that they must all have had one problem to face. At first most, and perhaps all, towns were subject to some lord—a baron, the abbot of a monastery, or perhaps the King—just as ordinary manors were. The people who lived in them had to till the lord's land as part of their rent, and have their markets and other affairs controlled by the lord's

Skilled Men reeve. This was very inconvenient, for in the ordinary town lived men who did work that did not fit in with the manor customs or with the Feudal system. There were in every town blacksmiths, tanners, bakers, tailors, carpenters and masons, and skilled men of other trades for whom it was most inconvenient to leave off their own work in order to get in the lord's hay or dig ditches.

Merchants In the more important towns there were, besides, merchants who needed to be free to move about in order to carry on their business. 'What about shopkeepers?' the modern reader may ask. But there were hardly any shops in England like ours till a much later time. Nearly all selling was done either at the workshop of the man who made the goods, or at fairs and markets. Markets and fairs brought money to a town, but it was not easy to hold them when a lord might interfere by increasing the tolls or imprisoning the merchants.



In 1377 the cities of LINCOLN, EXETER ,
OXFORD, LEICESTER , IPSWICH, BATH
& WELLS were already important places but
their total populations would fit with room
to spare into WARWICK today which is a
small town by modern standards

Why they
wanted
Charters

So the answer to the question 'How did the towns fit into the Feudal system?' is that they did not. One of the few things we know about these small towns is that they struggled hard for independence. Quite early the citizens of some managed to arrange to pay a money rent instead of working for the lord, and under Henry I, Henry II, Richard, and John, many towns bought or were granted charters which allowed the citizens to manage most of the town's affairs. For instance, towns arranged to pay their lord a lump sum each year, and then themselves collected the rents, tolls and profits to make it up. Merchants, and later craftsmen, began to get control of their own trades, and to organize them in what were called Guilds. But the Guilds were only just beginning at this time and we shall keep their story till Chapter 21. Under the charters of some towns, a villein who lived safely in a town for a year and a day gained his freedom. The towns did not want their affairs disturbed by a citizen being carried off by some lord after he had settled down.

Who granted
Charters?

The kings granted charters much more readily than the barons, who did not want to sell or grant away their rights. Bishops and abbots were the least willing of all, and towns on Church lands had to fight long and hard for their freedom. Mediaeval chroniclers are constantly telling of the riots of their inhabitants. Partly because a town with a charter could grow, most of the important towns therefore grew up on royal land.

Size of the
Towns

We know very little about how people lived in the smaller towns, but we know that such towns were very small indeed, really not much more than large villages, whose inhabitants went out every day to farm the land. Many of them probably had not more than one or two thousand people in them. You will realize how small they were if you look again at the picture-chart on page 53.

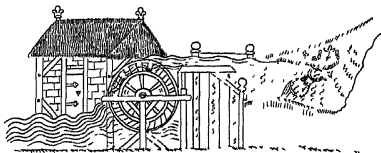
VI

London But London was different, and though some of the Londoners were still farmers it really was a town, and

had thirty or forty thousand people living in it. An account (in Latin) of London in the reign of Henry II was written by William FitzStephen in a preface to his life of the Archbishop Thomas à Becket. FitzStephen boasts about London—talks of the splendid royal palace, of the hundred and thirty-nine churches, of the walls and double gates that made it safe, and of the Tower of London, 'whose walls rise from deep foundations, exceeding great and strong'. He described how beyond the houses lie the gardens of the citizens. A new and beautiful kind of flower was grown in them—the rose—and they were besides 'planted with trees, spacious and

The Walls of
London

A New
Flower



WATERMILL AND FISH-TRAP

fair'. Here professional gardeners were employed and vegetables grown for sale in the town. To the north –

are pastures and pleasant meadows, crossed by running waters. Epping which turn mill wheels with merry din. Near by there stretches Forest a great forest with wooded glades and lairs of wild beasts, deer both red and fallow, wild boars and bulls. The cornfields are rich plains that fill the barns of the farmers.

In the Suburbs are also most excellent wells, whose waters are sweet, wholesome, and clean. Among these Holywell, Clerkenwell and Saint Clement's Well are most famous, and are visited by multitudes who go out on summer evenings to take the air. In truth a good city – when it has a good lord!

The three chief churches have famous schools. There are Schools also other schools licensed by special grace and permission. On holy days the scholars argue one against the other for all

to hear Some dispute for the purpose of display (which is but a wrestling bout of wit), but others that they may establish the truth Boys of different schools strive one against another in verse or contend about the principles of the art of grammar

Those that ply their trades, the sellers of each sort of merchandise, the hiers out of their several sorts of labour are found every morning each in their separate quarters To this city, from every nation that is under heaven, merchants rejoice to bring their trade in ships

One thing strikes FitzStephen as being a wonderful, new, and brilliantly clever arrangement

The Public Cook Shop There is in London, upon the river's bank, near where the wine is sold from ships and wine-cellars, a public cook shop There every day according to the season, you may find dishes roast, fried and boiled, fish great and small, the cheaper meat for the poor, the more delicate for the rich, such as venison and birds both big and little If friends, weary with travel, should of a sudden come to any of the citizens, and do not want to wait hungry till fresh food is bought and cooked, they hasten to the river bank, and there all things desirable are ready to their hand However great the crowd of knights or foreigners that come into the city or are about to leave it, at whatever hour of night or day, they turn aside thither, and refresh themselves each after his own manner I do not think there is any city deserving greater praise for its customs in the matter of church-going, keeping of feast days, giving of alms, entertainments of strangers, holding of weddings, furnishing of banquets and cheering of guests

'Cheering of
Guests'

The only plagues of London are the immoderate drinking of fools and the frequency of fires

FitzStephen adds that all the great men of England, including the Bishops and Abbots, have grand houses in London to which they go when the King summons them to great assemblies, or when their own business brings them there, and where they spend a great deal of money

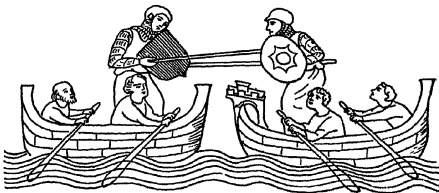
Then he goes on to describe the sports of the city

Holidays and Sports since it is not good that a city should only be useful and sober, unless it is also pleasant and merry Each year upon the day called Carnival (to begin with the sports of boys, for we were all boys once) boys from the schools bring fighting cocks to their master, and the whole morning is given up to boyish

sport After dinner all the youth of the city goes out into the fields to a game of ball

Every Sunday in Lent after dinner swarms of young gentles ride out on war-horses From the gates burst foith in throngs the lay sons of citizens, armed with lance and shield, the younger with shafts foiked at the end, but with no steel points Here they make mimic war Many of the courtiers come too, when the king is in London, and at Easter they make sport with naval tounneys

In summer there was archery and wrestling In the winter there was bull baiting, hog baiting, and bear



WATER JOUSTING

Another summer sport popular in London

baiting (hounds were let loose on the unfortunate beasts which—chained up—had to fight for their lives)

FitzStephen felt certain that there was no city in the world as good as London, but really there were a great many towns in France and Italy which were finer For England lay far away on the fringes of the great revival that was beginning in Western Europe How England managed to share to some extent in this revival, and what the revival meant, and how the first beginnings of great changes are to be seen at this time, will be told in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 17

THE GROWTH OF TRADE—CHANGES IN THE CHURCH—THE GROWTH OF LEARNING

(1216 TO ABOUT 1272)

Three things
that bound
Nations
together

THERE were three main ways in which all the countries of Europe between about 1216 and about 1272 were bound to one another

One of them was the Church of Rome. At Lincoln, Winchester or Durham, the bishop or abbot might be English, but he was just as likely to come from some province in France or Italy, or from some other country.

Secondly, there were the new universities which were springing up in most countries. Here, besides men from all the countries of Europe, might also be found learned Jews, Arabs and Greeks. And the mediaeval world had one advantage over our world. Everyone who had any education at all spoke and wrote in Latin, and so at the universities, in the monasteries and at church-councils, men of all these different nations could understand one another. The Latin that they spoke and wrote was not quite the Latin of the Romans but a more go-as-you-please language in which learned books, church services, excellent poetry, and all kinds of jingles, jokes and good stories were written.

Latin was
useful

The third thing which brought the nations of Europe together, the thing which made the growth of towns and learning possible, was the growth of trade.

II

Here at this time we have a very good instance of how, Trade when life gets easier, people learn new and better ways of doing things, and how when they have learnt better ways there is more time for learning new things

For the increase in trade at this time was partly made possible by better transport. Most ships now had a simple sort of compass, and this new tool meant that they did not have to try to stay in sight of land.

Mariners at sea [writes a chronicler] when — through cloudy weather in the day (which hides the sun) or through the darkness of the night — they lose the knowledge of the quarter of the world to which they are sailing, touch a needle with a magnet, which will turn round till, on its motion ceasing, its point will be towards the North

The compass had already been used for some long time by the Arabs and the Chinese

There were improvements too in the way a ship's sails were set, the ships themselves were larger, and they were now steered, not as they had always been before, by a big oar at one side, but by a proper rudder fixed at the stern. Better land maps and sea charts could now be made, because geometry and the science of measuring both plains and mountains were being studied



JEW'S

Jews are thought of too often only as the moneylenders of the day, but they were also the most learned doctors and earliest translators from the Arabic, through which the old learning came back to Europe

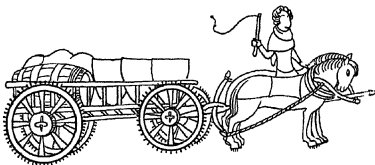
Better Ships

The Arabs had translated the books of Greek authors written hundreds of years before, and thus old learning helped new discoveries. Improvements in ways of cultivating the land and breeding animals meant that there were more horses for land transport and more corn and beans to keep them fit for work, while iron horse-shoes and a better sort of horse-collar came into use.

More Horses

Bad Roads

The roads, however, were still terrible and people who tried to travel in the winter were sometimes drowned in mudholes in them. Mediaeval people learned Roman law (which was a great help in settling and preventing



This shows horse-collar instead of beast band, the horses wear spiked horse-shoes and the wagon wheels were also spiked because of the mud.

disputes as soon as trade became important), educated people talked Latin, but Roman roads and Roman baths they never managed to understand¹. Because of the bad roads, goods generally had to be carried by pack-horses.

Pack-horses

Trade with the East

But, in spite of bad roads, trade grew. The great cities of Italy such as Venice, Genoa and Pisa traded with the East, buying spices, dyes, silks, and fine steel weapons—'Damascus blades' were particularly famous. From Italy other merchants took these goods on to France and Germany, and in the great fairs of Champagne they were exchanged for the woollen cloths made in France, England and Flanders, for linen from Brittany,

The great Fairs

for furs from Scandinavia and Russia, and for leather and rougher iron goods and silver from Germany

III

The Church had, as has been said, always been very international. Now a new type of churchman arose who helped a great deal in the exchange of ideas between nations. These men belonged to the great orders of ^{Friars} the wandering and begging friars, the Franciscans, the Dominicans and the Carmelites.

It may seem extraordinary to us that any new kind of churchman should be needed, for the Church was very rich, and the monks and priests were very numerous. But it was clear to the wisest people at that time, that the Church of the thirteenth century fell very far short of what was needed.

In the first place we have to remember that it was ^{Monks} not the monks' or the nuns' duty to tackle social evils and to try to put them right. Their duty was to withdraw from the world and save their own souls and those of others by constant prayer. Most of the time of a monk or a nun was supposed to be spent in church (he or she attended ^{Nine} nine services a day) and the rest in ^{services} reading, writing, teaching, learning in the cloisters, or ^{a day} working in gardens or workshops. So the best monks and nuns could not do much to help the outside world. But they did preserve books and learning, and all through the Middle Ages they wrote important and valuable works on the history of their own times. Most of them ^{' God's Inn} also gave food and shelter to all travellers - nobles, ^{where there} merchants, students, pilgrims—who passed their gates, ^{was naught} besides food and money to the poor who begged at their doors ^{to pay '}

By the thirteenth century many monks were no longer strictly observing their rules. But it was generally not because they wanted to help their fellow-men that they left their cloisters. The great abbots were drawn into the world because their wealth and lands gave them the ^{The great} ^{Abbeys}

position and responsibilities of great barons. The lesser officials of the monasteries had to come out because they had to manage their estates. The ordinary monk tended to wander out of his monastery only because he was bored. The ordinary laymen could get little help from the monks whether they kept their rules strictly or not at all.

Bishops The parish priests too had fallen on very bad days. Bishops were often important ministers of state with little time for looking after the priests who were under them. Those bishops who did try often found a terrible state of affairs in the villages. The Church was quite rich enough to train and pay the right sort of men to work as parish priests. But the tithes and fees often went to pay for quite different things—for building fine new abbeys, for paying ‘clerks’ who were really in the royal service, for helping scholars at the universities. What happened was that the priest who actually married and buried people, heard confession and consoled the dying, was often a miserable, badly paid deputy, too ignorant to teach or preach to the people. Friar Bacon (of whom more will be told later) used the parish priests as instances of ‘Parrot Learning’.

As clerks and country priests recite the Church services, of which they know little or nothing, like brute beasts

Many people still heathen The result was that many people, both in England and the Continent, were practically heathens, believing firmly in magic, demons and fairies. Many people believed in the ‘old religion’. Something like the religion of the Druids was still quite powerful, its followers being organized into ‘covens’. Their enemies called the members of these covens ‘witches’ and ‘warlocks’. The widespread contempt that was felt for priests by ordinary people can be seen in the hundreds of rude and funny stories told about them.

Such a state of affairs naturally shocked earnest Christians. On the Continent some broke away from the

Church altogether and became what we call nonconformists—that is, people who believe differently—but what were then called heretics—that is, people who believe wrong. Inside the Church itself great efforts were made to reform the bad state of things, the most important being the formation of a number of begging orders—the friars¹

Like monks, the friars took three vows—to be poor, The Friars never to marry, and to obey their superiors, but in other ways they were different. At first not only did no friar own anything, but even an order of friars had no property. They relied for a living upon what they could get by begging. They wandered through the country-side teaching the poor people or settled in the poorest parts of the town. Among the learned people at the universities also the friars took the lead. St Thomas Aquinas, William of Ockham, Roger Bacon and Duns Scotus were all famous at the universities and they all belonged to one or other order of friars.

IV

The universities were the third great link that held The Universities the different countries of Europe together at this time, and England (though a very backward country) was not too badly represented in them.

The greatest of all the universities was in Paris. Here The University of Paris the ideas of the learned men of all nations were exchanged very much as goods were exchanged at the great fairs and markets in Champagne. There were also universities in many of the great cities of Europe, for instance, at Salamanca in Spain, at Bologna in Italy, at Toulouse in France and here at Oxford and Cambridge. Some universities were set up by kings and rulers, some by private people who left estates in their wills whose revenues were to go 'for the advancement of learning', and some of them were founded by the students themselves who clubbed together and hired lecturers and teachers. If we follow the story

¹ The word *frat* comes from the Latin word for brother.

of one particular learned man it will be easier to see how the universities were used, what their good and bad points were, and what the friars had to do with them

Roger Bacon
1233

As a young man Roger Bacon studied at Oxford with Grosseteste. This Grosseteste was Bishop of Lincoln, and an excellent and learned man. Some of the Oxford scholars studied only Church doctrine, some wrote history, some poetry, but Roger Bacon was a scientist



A UNIVERSITY LECTURE

This shows the kind of dress worn by monks and friars

There were several things that make him very unlike a scientist of to-day. For one thing, he thoroughly believed in astrology and probably tried his hand at magic and alchemy (the search for the 'Elixir of Life' and for a way to turn mercury and sulphur into gold). Most scientists at this time firmly believed in astrology. That is, they thought that by a very careful study of the stars and planets you could make prophecies as to which side would win a battle, or whether a new-born child

would be lucky and what sort of character he would have. It is typical of this time that Roger Bacon was a Franciscan friar, and also that he was sometimes encouraged, and sometimes very severely discouraged, by his superiors in the Church.



A



B

MEDICAL SURGERY

A Setting a dislocated shoulder and elbow

B In the last picture a patient is calling for the medicine.
Notice the white cap or 'caul' worn by the doctor and his long gown

At first Friar Bacon worked at the new university at Oxford, where he considered that better lectures on science were given than at the University of Paris. When he did go to Paris he quarrelled with many of the learned doctors of Europe who gathered there, Bacon thought they spent too much time and energy in long disputes about such points as how many heavens there were, and how many hells, and how far it was from one heaven to

Bacon at
Oxford

What ought
a Scientist
to study ?

another, and what was beyond the last heaven, and how many different sorts of pain there were in hell He thought there could never be an answer or an end to that sort of question It would be far better, he said, if people who wanted to understand and learn things did two things First, he thought they ought to learn Arabic and Greek so as to read what Aristotle the Greek and the learned Arabs had said in the languages it was written in, instead of in bad translations He declared that many of the university professors knew hardly any arithmetic, geometry, or astronomy, or understood a science in which Bacon himself was particularly interested—Optics (why a stick half in the water looks bent, why things at a distance look small) The second thing he believed was even more important Roger Bacon felt sure that if anything fresh was to be learnt it was necessary to make experiments Learned men must take their noses out of their books and look at things for themselves It was no good arguing about whether barnacles turned into geese, or whether you could turn half-rotten corn into mice, you must look and try!

Do Barnacles
turn into
Geese ?

It was in Paris that Bacon met a man who seemed to him exactly what a man of science ought to be This is how he described his friend

Bacon
describes his
Friend

Of arguments, speeches and battles of words he takes no heed He is a master of experiment Through experiment he gains knowledge of natural things, medical, chemical, indeed of everything He is ashamed that anything should be known to laymen, old women, soldiers, and ploughmen, of which he is ignorant Therefore he has looked closely into doings of all kinds hunting, farming work, and the measuring of land He even takes notice of the remedies, lot-casting and charms used by old women and wizards, and of the deceptions of conjurers, so that nothing which deserves inquiry should escape him As for reward, he neither receives nor seeks it If he sought out Kings and Princes he would easily find those who would give him honours and wealth, or if he would display the results of his researches in Paris the whole world would follow him But to do either of these things, would hinder him from his experiments in which he delights

No one was sure at this time where magic ended and the real world began. Learned men believed that man was the most important of all created beings and that the earth was the centre of the universe. Round the earth revolved circles: first, the circle of air that we breathe, then a circle of water, then one of ether, then

What was
believed
about the
Universe



A MEDIEVAL MAP

Showing Jerusalem as the centre of a flat world

Notice 'Paradis' marked at the top

one of fire—'the flaming walls of the world'. The sun, the moon and the planets were part of the circle of fire. Heaven was above and beyond the circle of fire, hell below and beyond it.

These circles surrounded the world—they thought—in the way that the yolk of an egg is surrounded first by its white and then by its shell. They believed that the

seas and oceans that men sailed on were somehow part of the circle of water. This was the sort of story that was told and firmly believed.

In the county of Gloucester [wrote Gervase of Tilbury] is a town named Bristol, wealthy and full of prosperous citizens, from this port men sail for Ireland. It befell upon a time that a native of Bristol sailed to Ireland, leaving his wife and children at home. Then, after a long sea voyage, as he sailed on a far-off ocean, he chanced to sit banqueting with the mainners and, after eating, as he washed his knife over the ship's side, it slipped suddenly from his hands. At that same hour, at Bristol, the knife fell in through the roof-window of that same citizen and stuck in the table that was set before his wife. The woman, marvelling at so strange a thing, was dumbfounded, and, laying aside this well-known knife, she learned long afterwards, on her husband's return, that his misfortune had befallen on the very day and hour whereon she had found it. Who, then, will now doubt, after the publication of this testimony, that a sea leth over this earth of ours, whether in the air or above the air?

At the universities the learned men did not know how to divide up the things that they wanted to study into subjects small enough to give one man a real chance of pushing on, and learning more about some particular thing. This is a list of the things Roger Bacon studied—

What Bacon studied the magnet, astrology, how to make a new kind of dye, the Elixir of Life, the influence of climate on character, the behaviour of light, the art of measuring the height of trees or towers, Arab and Greek grammar, geography, the nature of angels and demons, agriculture, and the curing of wounds. For fourteen years his opinions on science were thought to be so shocking that he was kept a prisoner in a monastery by order of the chief of the Franciscan friars. But at last a new Pope realized the importance of Bacon's ideas, and he was asked to write them in a book for the Pope to read. At the very beginning of this book Bacon wrote

The four General Causes of Human Ignorance and Error are *Undue Regard to Authority, Custom, Popular Prejudice, and a False Conceit of our own Wisdom*

One sort of reputation Roger Bacon the Englishman shared with nearly all the earlier scientists such as Michael of Scotland, Herman of Carinthia, Jabir the Arab, Rhazes the Persian and Avicenna. Simple people thought that they were one and all just magicians.¹ Wonderful stories of Friar Bacon's doings were told. He was supposed to have made a huge Brazen Head which spoke. The head was just going to tell him how to build a wall of brass all round England so that there should be no more invasions.¹ Unfortunately, says the tale, his servant Miles went to sleep instead of watching for the critical moment when the Brazen Head spoke, otherwise this very thing would have been done.¹ This was the sort of story that was honestly believed and told at many a fireside during the long winter evenings in hall and cottage. To this day some people think that Roger Bacon was the inventor of gunpowder.

Magicians

The Head of
Brass

CHAPTER 18

HENRY III—SIMON DE MONTFORT AND THE FIRST PARLIAMENT (1216 TO 1295)

Where we have got to
1216 CHAPTER 14 told the story of the struggle between King and barons up to the time when Magna Carta had been signed, John had tried to get out of his promises, and the barons had summoned the King of France's son. Then (the reader will remember) John suddenly died, and, his nine-year-old son Henry III having been crowned, the barons decided that they preferred a child king whom they could control to a grown French prince who might have his own ideas. They then successfully chased the French out of England.

Why history of Laws and Government matters
Then in Chapters 15 and 16 was told the story of how people lived, what they thought the world was like, and of the many changes that were taking place in England and in the rest of the world—changes that really make history much more than the doings of governments. But it must never be forgotten that changes in government are very important too. For unless kings, barons, the law, councils, and parliaments are able to change with the changes that take place in a country owing to new knowledge, new inventors, and new ways of life, then one of two things happens. Either governments which won't change have to go (much as a stone may be cracked or pushed aside by a living tuft of grass) or else, if it cannot push an out-of-date kind of government away, the life of a country may be strangled and stopped and that country gets behind the rest of the world. This very thing has happened again and again in many countries.

II

For the moment, however, things were going well in England, so that Henry III's long reign of fifty-six years was one of the brightest periods in English mediaeval history. The population was growing, towns and trade were growing too, waste land was being reclaimed and swamps drained. The Universities (in spite of the rude things Bacon said of them) increased learning, and England was prosperous.



MEDIAEVAL WOOD CARVING FROM A CHURCH IN NORTHAMPTON

beautiful new churches and cathedrals were built (see page 50)

But although his reign was in some ways so much happier than John's, Henry III also had trouble with both the Church and the barons, though Henry himself never quarrelled with the Church as John had done. He was too pious and too grateful for the help which the Pope had given him at the beginning of his reign. In fact, the trouble arose because he was much too apt to do anything the Popes suggested, and allowed them Henry's piety

seriously to misuse their power in England. While he was still a child the difficulty did not arise, for the Pope and his representatives were sincerely anxious to help the Regent, Hubert de Burgh, to govern the country well. But later Popes were far more interested in fighting for political power in Germany and Italy. At any time, of course, fighting costs money, and the Popes soon came to rely more and more upon England for that

1246 money. 'Verily,' said one of them in 1246, 'England is our garden of delights, verily it is an unexhausted well, where much abounds, much may be extorted.'

Pope taxes English Clergy Much was extorted. Heavy taxes were demanded from both barons and clergy, and although the barons refused, the clergy were forced to pay. What was worse, the Pope rewarded many of his Italian followers by giving them English parishes, which they usually never visited (although they pocketed the tithes). In 1255 Henry

1255 Henry and the Pope's wars went so far as to agree to send an army to drive the Pope's enemies out of Sicily and to take the throne of that kingdom for his young son. 'When men heard these things,' writes the chronicler Mathew Paris, 'the ears of all men tingled and their hearts stood still with amazement.' The plan came to nothing, but it cost Henry a lot of money.

Foreigners unpopular The Pope became extremely unpopular, especially among the clergy who were taxed, among the students who saw foreigners getting the jobs they wanted, and among the better bishops such as Grosseteste of Lincoln, who

Riots against Foreign Clergy had been the teacher of Roger Bacon. Riots broke out when the Pope's legate visited Oxford. His messengers were attacked, a particularly unpopular one being thrown into Dover harbour. As the Pope had used his power to enrich foreigners, and as he had been supported by the King, both King and foreigners became unpopular as well.

III

The great nobles again Henry himself was more directly concerned with the trouble with the barons. These soon found that he

could annoy and injure them without seriously breaking the promises in Magna Carta. The barons were steadily squeezed out of the high offices of state, which were then given to unimportant people. If great nobles were left in high offices they often found that both duties and power had been transferred to the clerks of the King's household. Although Henry III was not a wicked man, in some ways he used his power badly. He was extravagant, and wasted money in trying to regain the lost territories in France and to get the crown of Sicily for his son. What was even more annoying to the English nobles, was that he gave lands and money and offices to large numbers of his French wife's foreign relations.

Consequently there grew up among the barons a dislike of foreigners very much like the hatred which was growing in the Church. Both clergy and laymen took up the idea of 'England for the English' in a way quite unknown before in the history of the country. Although the hatred of foreigners is often a foolish and dangerous feeling, in this case it seems to have been justified. For both the foreign priests and the King's relations owed their positions not to merit, but to favouritism, and looked upon England as a place in which to get rich.

When the clash with Henry III actually came, the barons did not do what their fathers had done to John. They saw that it was useless to force the King simply to sign a charter. For even if he could be forced to keep his promises, no charter could possibly cover all the unpopular things that a king might do. So when they at last decided to act, what they did was to try to take over the business of government themselves. In 1258 the King was forced to sign the Provisions of Oxford whereby a committee of barons was appointed to rule the country. And when Henry got permission from the Pope to break his promise and started a civil war, he was taken prisoner by the baron's leader, a very able nobleman named Simon de Montfort. But in 1265

'England for the English'

Barons try a new policy

1258 Provisions of Oxford

Prince Edward his son defeated and killed Simon at Evesham, and once more the barons' revolt fizzled out

IV

Middle class
takes a hand

But by now there was one factor that seriously complicated the whole quarrel between the King and the barons. The middle classes began to interfere. From now on the 'middle classes' will be repeatedly met with in English history, so it is a good thing to see what is meant by these words.

In Italy
and the
Netherlands
1250 to 1300

The name 'middle class' is generally given to those people who come in the middle of the social scale—that is, between the nobles and the mass of the working population. Middle-class families are always fairly well off and sometimes very rich, and most of them get at least part of their income as profits from other people's labour. To-day, most people of the middle class are townsmen and get their living from trade, industry, or finance (Stock Exchange, Banking and so on). At the time we are writing about this was also true of the middle class in Italy and in the Netherlands. Middle-class townsmen, that is to say rich merchants and traders, were practically in control of the great trading cities of those countries.

1250

But in England, when we think of the middle class at this time we mean chiefly country gentlemen—the smaller tenants-in-chief of the King, and the 'mesne' or middle tenants of the barons.

Middle class
gets a voice
in Central
Government

Ever since the time of Henry II the power of these people had been growing. The country gentry ran the shire courts and helped the royal judges as they travelled round the country. Many of the royal officers also came from their ranks. But townsmen played a part too. A good many towns, as we have seen, had managed to get charters giving elected mayors and aldermen control over their local affairs. Everything that weakened the barons increased the importance of this new class. Under Henry III they began to get a voice in the affairs of the central government. At first it was only a very

small voice But as will be seen, it was the House of Commons that, in the future, was to express the wishes and opinions of the middle classes, and the earliest beginnings of the House of Commons are to be found in the reign of Henry III

V

It had always been the practice of the kings of England Parliament occasionally to call together the chief barons and officials of the country to discuss national affairs The Anglo-Saxons had called such a gathering a Witan, the Normans had called it a Great Council, under Henry III it began to be called by its modern name—Parliament¹ From 1254 onwards representatives of the country gentry were sometimes summoned as well They were elected by their fellows in the shire courts and were known as 'knights of the shire' At first their influence was very small They simply listened, spoke when they were spoken to, and had no vote in the final decisions They were simply there to give the King any local information that he might want, and to take back to their shires a complete explanation of the taxes that had to be collected But they were important, for out of this meek troop of silent 'knights of the shire' there grew the modern House of Commons From the assembly of bishops and barons summoned to Parliament grew the modern House of Lords

It is quite easy to understand that if the middle classes were important enough to be summoned to Parliament by the King, they were too important to be ignored by rebellious barons. This is just what the barons themselves soon found The Provisions of Oxford had simply transferred power from the King to a council and parliament in which the country gentry were not repre-

¹ The word comes from the French '*parler*', to talk or speak. It was called a *Parliament* because the members came to talk and discuss Parliament to-day is sometimes called 'the talking shop' by impatient members.

They speak without being spoken to sented But the next year these country gentry came with their own demands, and they forced King and council not only to redress their grievances against the King but—in the Provisions of Westminster—to limit

Power of the King and Barons limited the power of the barons over them as landlords It was partly through the support of the middle classes that Simon de Montfort was at first successful in the

De Montfort's Parliament 1265 civil war, for many of the barons themselves opposed him and supported the King When in 1265 he called a parliament de Montfort took the important step of calling representatives not only of the country gentry but of the townsmen One more step had been taken towards the parliament of to-day De Montfort was soon defeated and killed, but his death did not mean the defeat of the middle class

Edward I 1272 Edward I, who succeeded his father in 1272, was one of the ablest kings that ever sat upon the English throne A series of great laws that he issued, besides undermining the strength of the barons, played a great part in shaping English Common Law His skill as a soldier enabled him greatly to influence the history of Scotland and Wales, and he saw that it would be far wiser and far better to work with, rather than against, the country gentlemen and the townsmen For the better carrying out of the law he relied to a great extent upon picked gentry in each shire who, during his reign, were known as Conservators of the Peace, and later were given their modern title of Justices of the Peace As the years went by these men and their successors gradually got more and more of the business of local government in their hands and became more and more important Edward I, when he wanted money for his many wars, continued to call knights from the shire and burgesses to most of his parliaments The parliament of 1295 has come down in history with the title of the Model Parliament, for many years it seems to have been considered to have been the most properly constituted of Parliaments To it were summoned both knights and burgesses

Model
Parliament
1295

CHAPTER 19

WALES, SCOTLAND AND IRELAND

WHAT were the wars for which Edward I wanted money ? The reader will remember that ever since the time of the Norman Conquest there had been constant wars with France, but French Kings and Dukes were not the only hostile neighbours that a king who wanted to rule England had to reckon with. There were also the Welsh Princes, the King of Scotland, and the Kings and Princes of Ireland.

William the Conqueror had tried to settle the Welsh question by allowing the barons who settled on the Welsh border to have all their estates together so that they might be strong enough to keep out the Welsh. Later kings had let it be understood that if these barons—who were called Lords of the Marches, which means boundaries—managed to conquer land from any of the Welsh Princes, then they could keep the land they had won. So gradually they had conquered more and more land to the westward, pushing their way up the valleys and so carving out fresh estates for themselves.

On the borders of these new estates they built castles for protection against the Welsh tribesmen and against each other. By about 1250 most of Wales had thus come under the control of these Lords Marchers, and only Anglesey and the wild rocky country round Snowdon remained to the Welsh Princes.

In Ireland the story was much the same. Parts of the Ireland south-east were slowly conquered by Norman, Welsh and Anglo-Norman barons such as the famous Richard

Clare, Earl of Pembroke, who was called 'Strongbow'. Though these foreign barons were not popular, yet both in Wales and Ireland they and their followers did bring in some improvements, for on the whole England was ahead in such things as agriculture, crafts and trades, and if the English had not been there to fight, the Welsh



HARLECH CASTLE

Compare this plain solid building with Gloucester Cathedral (page 50)

and Irish Princes would certainly have fought amongst themselves

Scotland In Scotland the position was rather different. As in Wales and Ireland, Norman barons lorded it over the Celtic Princes and Chiefs, but in this case the barons had not simply conquered their new estates, but had been granted them by the Kings of Scotland.

England's three Neighbours So it came about that England had as neighbours three kingdoms in which the real native inhabitants were more or less independent Celts who were kept down against their wills by Norman and English barons. But

in Wales and Ireland these barons held their lands, in name at least, from the Kings of England. In Scotland they held them from independent Scottish Kings.

During the troubles under Henry III Welsh armies under the famous Prince Llewellyn tried to win back the land that had been lost. Edward I was determined in some way or another to get control of the whole British Isles, and marched to attack Llewellyn, whose armies starved out by blocking the passes that led to the wild mountain country where they had taken refuge. Llewellyn surrendered, but five years afterwards he made another try for independence and was killed in battle. Edward divided up Wales into counties and built a chain of immensely strong stone castles such as Conway, Caernarvon, Criccieth and Harlech, whose magnificent keeps and walls can be seen to this day (see picture on page 78). In 1301 he had his young son proclaimed Prince of Wales, a title ever since borne by the eldest son of the King of England.

Llewellyn of Wales

Edward I has Castles built in Wales

1301

With Scotland he at first tried different tactics. Alexander, the King of Scotland, had no son, and his heir was his granddaughter, Margaret, the child of the King of Norway. Edward proposed that his son, Edward Prince of Wales, should marry Margaret, 'The Maid of Norway' as she was called. This was arranged, but on the voyage over she fell sick and died. Then Edward set the chroniclers to look out old documents to prove that he himself was the rightful overlord of Scotland, and thus had the right to decide who was to be chosen as the next Scottish king. This way of reading history was not accepted by the Scottish barons, and when Edward chose John Balliol, most of them rebelled. Edward was away fighting in France, but as soon as he was able, he marched on Scotland and conquered it, burning and destroying as he went. This time he did not appoint another king, but ruled, or tried to rule, with his own officials. This was extremely unpopular, and, under William Wallace, a Scottish army assembled, which beat the English armies.

Thus a different plan with Scotland

Edward Overlord of Scotland?

William Wallace

and drove them out of Scotland and far over the English border Wallace in England behaved as cruelly as Edward had done in Scotland Edward, who was once more fighting in France, came home and again attacked Wallace, and, after a great deal of bloodshed, Wallace was killed and his army beaten

1305 Another Scottish leader immediately came forward
Robert Bruce Robert Bruce had himself crowned king and the fighting went on for two more years Edward I was again marching against Scotland with an army when he died He was succeeded by his son Edward II If Edward I had not managed to conquer Scotland certainly Edward II would not be able to do it !

Edward II 1307 Edward II was, like his father, a tall, handsome man, and ever since he had been a child, his father had tried to teach him statecraft and generalship But he cared for nothing but amusing himself, and—being a foolish fellow—took a violent liking first to one and then to another courtier who could amuse him All through his reign there were quarrels between the barons on one side and the King and his favourites on the other, and Robert Bruce used the time to win back land from the English

1314 Seven years after Edward I's death, Edward II and the barons dropped their quarrels for a while, and once more an English army marched on Scotland, this time to be heavily defeated at the battle of Bannockburn After his victory Robert Bruce most cruelly burnt and ravaged the border counties of England

POINTS TO BE NOTICED ABOUT PART III

(1066 TO 1307)

1 That owing to the fact that William the Conqueror wanted to know how much his new kingdom was worth, and had 'Doomsday Book' compiled (1086), more is known about England at this time than about any other country

2 That the great majority of all the people living in England during this time were serfs

3 That after the Normans came to England the crown either went to the King's eldest son or was left by him in his will, and the new king was no longer chosen by the Council. This sometimes led to trouble

4 That for about 200 years (from 1095) there were successive wars between Christians and Mohammedans. These were called Crusades and had two purposes: (1) to win back the holy places in Jerusalem, (2) to keep open the routes over which trade with the East was carried on

5 That the object of the most capable kings was to organize and keep running a central government that could keep order and see that the laws were obeyed. In this work the kings were often opposed by the barons and Church. The barons because they wanted to gain advantages for themselves, the Church because the Popes had the same policy as the best kings of England—that is, they too wanted a strong central government at Rome which could have full command over churchmen in all countries. That Bishops and Abbots were also important landowners (at one time a third of the land in England was in the hands of churchmen). That there were sharp conflicts between King and Pope and in one case the Archbishop of Canterbury was murdered in his own cathedral

6 That up to about 1200 towns were only few and small, and that farming was not nearly as efficient as it is now. The spice trade was so important because there was nothing to feed farm animals on through the winter and there was therefore no fresh meat during half the year. People longed for spices to make the cured meat less nasty

7 That about 1200, towns and trade began to grow and become important

8 That towards the middle of this time universities were established all over Europe, and that in these universities new things were learnt about the world and its people, and books written by the ancient Greeks were again studied. That Friar Roger Bacon, an Englishman, is typical of the scientists of this time

9 That everything was made by hand or with the use of hand tools. There were no spinning-wheels as yet and the only machines were wind- and water-mills. Glass windows were used in churches and by very rich men

10 That about 1254 (under King Henry III) the Council that the Anglo-Saxons had called the Witan and the Normans called the Great Council, began to be called by its modern name—Parliament. And that by the end of this time it had

become usual to summon to it not only the great nobles and churchmen, but also townsmen and 'Knights of the Shire'—that is, men elected by the middle class, which had now begun to become important

11 That all through this period change was very slow

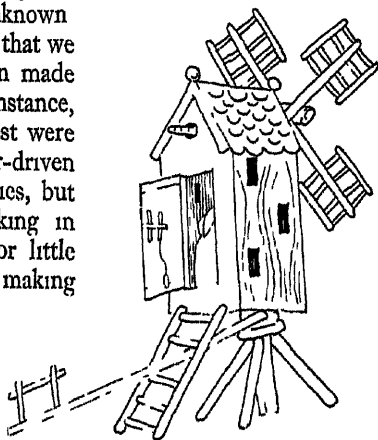
12 That the sources from which we learn about this time are Chronicles written by Monks and Priests, and also by Laymen, Domesday Book, Charters granted by the King, and new laws

PART FOUR

INTRODUCTION

UNTIL now this book has told a story of people whose lives were obviously very different from those lived in England to-day. There were no great factories and works. Many of the things now in common use—matches, kitchen ranges, bicycles, watches—were unknown. Many of the things that we now buy were then made at home (for instance, candles), and the rest were made, not by power-driven machines in factories, but by craftsmen working in their own houses or little workshops, and making everything with hand tools, as a village blacksmith sometimes does to-day. Yarn was spun, cloth was woven, clothes, boots, and furniture, were all made by hand. The only real machines of the time were the wind- and water-mills used for grinding corn and sometimes for pumping and sawing. People travelled very slowly on horseback or in small sailing ships. No one knew enough about geography to draw anything like a

Things they
had not got



Hand Tools

A PRIMITIVE WINDMILL.

No Maps correct map even of Europe, and the strangest tales were told and believed about the more distant parts of the world—there were countries where people had eyes in their chests and the ants were as big as dogs! No one knew of the existence of the American Continent. Very few people could read or write. The ordinary poor man shared his mud house with the farm animals. The animals were small and thin, and all winter there was no milk or fresh meat for anyone.

There have been great changes in the past six hundred years. From now on, it is about these changes that we shall chiefly tell in this history. For although the past was very different, the present has grown out of it just as an oak-tree grows out of an acorn. The purpose of learning history is to discover exactly when and how that growth took place.

How do things change? It is not enough to know how people used to live. What is important is to find out how the old conditions were changed into the better ones of to-day. For if people can once learn that, they may be able to discover how to change those of to-day into even better ones. From the time of the Saxon invasion (four hundred years before the Norman Conquest) to the time of Edward I changes were very few and slow. But from this point, changes

Change becomes quicker in what people knew, and in the way they lived, become more rapid, and we shall have to leave out most other things in order to find room to tell of this sort of growth. But before this history goes on to describe the great changes that happened during the last two hundred years of what is generally called the 'Mediaeval Period' or 'The Middle Ages', the reader must hear a little of two great evils that fell on England in the fourteenth century—the Hundred Years' War and a terrible plague called The Black Death. Both these, though bad in themselves, made change come more quickly.

CHAPTER 20

THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR WITH FRANCE AND THE BLACK DEATH

THE reader will have noticed that Edward I's wars with Scotland between 1295 and 1307 were several times interrupted by the fact that the King was away fighting in France. After Edward II's defeat at Bannockburn in 1314 the attempt at conquering Scotland was given up, partly because of the quarrels of the King and his favourites with the barons, and partly because there was fresh trouble with France. Why the French wars broke out again is a confused story, but it is also an interesting one, for it is an example of how the rise of a new class, and new kinds of crafts and trades comes into the story of the relations of a country with its neighbours.

England and Flanders did a trade in wool which was growing fast, and on which England's prosperity very much depended. This trade was, of course, carried on by sea, partly in English and partly in Flemish ships, and the richer the trade grew, the more the coming and going of the merchant ships was interfered with by pirates who set out from French harbours, and whom the French Kings did not seriously try to stop. The consequence was that, before 1337 (when the official Hundred Years' War between France and England began), there had been an unofficial naval warfare going on between English merchants and French pirates. Most of this sea fighting was on a fairly small scale. A single ship would be attacked, its crew murdered, and the cargo stolen. But occasionally there would be regular pitched battles between pirate and merchant fleets.

How new
Trades and
Crafts touch
Foreign
Policy

Wool and
Ships

Pirates

Battles
between
Pirates and
Merchants

II

If the French
Kings had
controlled
Flanders

Also the English were very anxious about who should have control of Flanders. In Flanders there was an important weaving and cloth-finishing industry which bought large quantities of English wool. The French King was trying to get control of Flanders and, if he succeeded, he would be able, whenever he wanted, to forbid

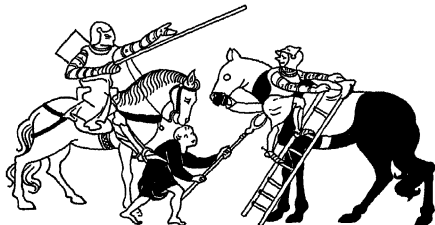
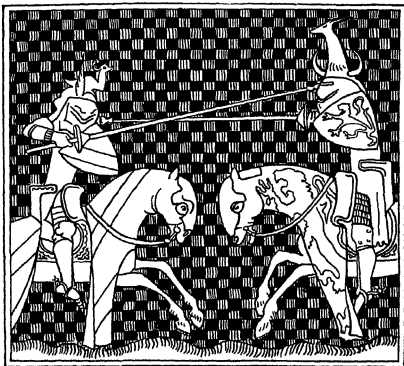


CLOTH AND WOOL MERCHANTS

The two men on the right are just shaking hands on a bargain. Notice the different kinds of shoes, and the curious hood with a long tail.

the buying of wool from England, thereby severely hurting (1) the merchants who traded in it, (2) the great landowners whose tenants grew it, (3) and the King who taxed it. The King of France also wanted to take Guienne and Gascony from the English King.

Also there were on both sides many men among the nobles and rulers whom to-day we should call militarists—that is, men who, despite all the horrors and cruelties of



The top picture shows knights jousting with blunt spears, as this is a sham fight. Notice the huge helmets, and the embroidered trappings of the horses.

Below is a 'comic turn' at a tournament. The dwarf, dressed as a knight, is being helped to mount with a pitchfork and a ladder.

war, liked it because of the excitement, the fame and the money they got out of it. Such men were Edward III (who was King of England from 1327 to 1377), the Black Prince, his son, and Henry V (who reigned from 1413 to 1422). Such professional fighters preferred fighting the French to fighting the Scots, for the French were richer and there was more booty and more glory for the winner. It was the claim that Edward III made to the crown of France that started the official war.

III

War begins officially 1337 In 1337 regular war began, and it grew to be the longest in history—the Hundred Years' War. There was not, of course, continuous fighting for a hundred years. Neither country could possibly afford that. But on and off for 112 years France was fought over by invading English armies.

Who won the Hundred Years' War? When we hear of a war, the first question we ask is—**who won it?** But if we carefully examine the results of the Hundred Years' War we are forced to conclude that neither side won. At different times each side won big victories. During the earlier part of the war the two

Crecy, 1346
Portiers, 1356
Agincourt, 1415 chief English victories were at Crecy (1346) and, ten years later, at Portiers (1356) and—fifty-nine years after that—at Agincourt (1415). These three battles are important because they were won against armoured knights by archers armed with the longbow. (Edward had about 10,000 longbowmen at Crecy.) In these three battles the defeat of knights in their heavy armour by men-at-arms began something which the general use of gunpowder a generation later completed. That is to say it proved that, just as the feudal way of farming and holding land was getting out of date, so in war also, the feudal nobles would have to change with the times or be defeated.

Knights defeated by Bowmen

In the later part of the war the French changed their tactics and fought from their towns and castles. The longbow was, of course, no use against stone walls. It

was not till later, when armies used cannon and iron cannon-balls, that stone walls too became useless

But in the long run both French and English suffered losses far greater than their gains

IV

Take the case of France. In some ways France seems to have won. No English King ever got the French crown, by the end of the war the English had lost both Normandy and Gascony and their only French possession was the town of Calais. But the cost to France was enormous. Before the war it was the most peaceful and prosperous country in Europe and had been steadily advancing for centuries. By the end of the war its prosperity was possibly less, certainly not much more than before it. Nothing like a normal century's progress.

In any place in France where there was fighting, farming was at a standstill and crops were destroyed. Each army took what it wanted and burned the rest, either killing the peasants or driving them to the woods or towns. When the fighting was over the peasants were scarcely likely to farm at their best when the armies might come back at any moment. In the early fifteenth century a French bishop described a part of France over which the armies had fought.

A few patches of cultivated land or vineyard might here and there be seen, but rarely, and never but in the immediate neighbourhood of a castle or a walled town. Whenever the labourer ventured out of the enclosure, a watchman took his stand upon the watch-tower that he might blow his horn on the approach of the enemy. So familiar had the sound become that even the oxen and the sheep hurried homewards when they heard its first warning note.

The French towns did not suffer so much, for after the early years they defended themselves with strong walls. But their trade was injured and they were often filled with unemployed craftsmen and peasants. The soldiers of both sides behaved with great cruelty. On

one occasion in the later part of the war, Henry V of England was besieging Rouen. The defending soldiers, fearing that they would have to give in through lack of food, turned all the women and children out of the town. Henry V would do nothing for them, and both sides left them to starve to death between the town walls and the English camp.



WINDING THE CROSS
BOW

Cross-bows were forbidden in 1139 as 'deathly and hateful to God', but were used again in the reign of Richard I who died by one. They were again forbidden by Henry VII.

Intervals in the fighting did not bring much of a breathing space for the French people. Each side employed, for their fighting, bands of professional soldiers of all countries and classes — French, English, Welsh, Hungarians, Italians, Flemings, Germans. When their pay stopped with the coming of temporary peace, these bands of soldiers became bands of robbers, and ravaged the country on their own account. The suffering they caused is commemorated to-day by the French and English word 'brigand' — a word which comes from 'brigantin', the fine coat of mail which they wore.

To cap all, partly as a result of these sufferings, France was in this period several times the scene of a bloody civil war. There were wars among members of the royal family, and several times the merchants and craftsmen of Paris rebelled against the King. At different places the oppressed peasants rose and murdered their landlords, to be in turn put down with great cruelty. France indeed paid heavily for her victory.

Joan of Arc One beautiful story is told of this long war, but that too is tragic. It is the story of Joan of Arc and is probably

already well known to most of the readers of this book In 1429—when Henry V of England was dead—the English were still winning victories A peasant girl, named Joan, came to court and told the French King that voices from heaven had told her that it was her task to deliver France

She persuaded him to let her have her way, and for a year she rode dressed in armour, on a white horse, at the head of the French armies, which from that time on were victorious She was at last captured by the English, tried by the Church, and burned as a witch, the French making little or no effort to save her A few years ago she was canonized—that is, officially declared by the Pope to have been a saint

V

England also shows a balance on the wrong side At times the English Kings had the pleasure of governing large parts of France A few London merchants made big fortunes In the early years, before the French strengthened the walls of their towns and castles, much

What happened in England



A MIDIALVAL BANQUET

Notice the cup and the wine-flagons Only the nobles had tablecloths

plunder was brought home Thomas Walsingham, the
 After Crecy mediaeval historian, tells us that after the English victory
 1346 at Crecy (1346)

There was no woman of note in England without some of
 the booty of Calais or other foreign towns—clothes, furs,
 Booty pillows, cushions, mattresses, utensils, jewels, table-cloths,
 gold and silver cups, linen and draperies appeared throughout
 England in every house

Fortunes were made in a few months, but this did not
 last, and trade in general was injured by taxes and
 pirates Agriculture was also handicapped by taxation
 and because so many of the men were away fighting
 All the land battles were fought abroad, but many of the
 towns on the south coast of England were burnt at least
 once

The companies of professional soldiers never ravaged
 England as they did France, but those that returned
 found it easier to drift into crime and violence than to
 settle down to work, and there was a general undermining
 of law and order

VI

Health and The other great evil was a new disease Mediaeval
 Sicknes life was terribly unhealthy Very little was known about
 health, no one thought that keeping clean was important,
 and, partly as a result, people were considerably smaller
 than we are and did not live so long

Dirty Towns In towns there was no proper water supply and no
 drains, two things which began to matter now that people
 once more began to live packed close together The only
 advance that doctors had made since Roman times was
 Sickneses that they had now noticed that certain illnesses were
 catching catching

The first illness thought of as catching was Leprosy
 Leprosy had been only an Eastern disease, but it came
 into Europe via the Mediterranean and spread northward
 The Leper The leper was banished from human society in case he

gave his sickness to other people. He was declared legally dead and was kept out of every church or allowed to attend only on special seats and a special basin of holy water was set for him. These cruel laws were, however, effective and in course of centuries freed Europe from leprosy. (It is said that at one time there were 20,000 lepers in France alone.)

Gradually a number of other diseases were recognized as infectious. Among these were plague and fevers with obvious rashes. The authorities in towns were from time to time ordered to put patients suffering from such diseases outside the city gates or to forbid them to trade in food and drink. The terrible epidemic of the Black Death of 1347-8 brought rules of this sort into special force.

Outside many towns (Guildford for instance) there were already leper houses—mere shelters as a rule, but now a few monasteries and convents set up hospitals. These were not much like modern hospitals—for instance, patients often slept two in a bed—but at least some effort was made by the nuns to take care of the sick and not merely to get rid of them. Leper Houses
Hospitals

One of the precautions that was taken against plague has given us a word that is still in use. Several Italian ports arranged to have a special dock—far from the city—where suspected ships could lie. Here ships and goods had to wait for forty days. This time of waiting was called 'Quarantina', which means forty in Italian. From it came the modern word 'Quarantine'. But there was not really enough knowledge for doctors to be able to do much either to prevent or cure sickness. 'Quarantine'

In 1348 there appeared in England the terrible bubonic plague, a deadly illness which is carried by fleas, and which is therefore particularly dangerous in a dirty country like mediaeval England. The Black Death, 1348

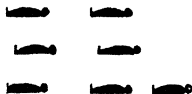
We first hear of the disease in China in about 1340. The infection crossed Asia to South Russia, probably carried by fleas in bales of goods. From there it went by

Fleas and Rats merchant ship to Genoa, probably by fleas on rats. Then it passed along the trade routes all over Europe. The disease spread rapidly, for a series of famines had weakened people's powers of resistance. In 1348 the Black Death, as it was called here, reached Weymouth, in the south-west of England.

The doctors of the time were helpless and often cowardly. All sorts of quack cures were tried, without success. The chief remedies were to pray to God, or to run away from infection. In later years—for it was more than three hundred years before the plague died out here—there grew up a proverb that the disease could be cured by three words: quick, far, and late. Start quick, go far, and come back late. In 1349 about one-third of the population of England seems to have died.

Sheep and cattle [says a chronicler] went wandering over fields and through crops, and there was none to go and drive or fatten them, so that many perished in the ditches in every district for lack of herdsmen, for there was such a scarcity of servants that no one knew what he had to do. Crops perished in the fields for want of someone to gather them.

For the time being, trade and industry could hardly be carried on in the stricken districts, the whole country was crippled, and the great outbreak of 1348 was followed by a series of smaller ones. During the last two hundred years of the Middle Ages, England was being troubled by both war and sickness, both of which made the country poorer, both of which made men discontented, and both of which hastened the changes that were taking place.



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE



LEICESTERSHIRE



HERTFORDSHIRE

CHART TO SHOW THE APPROXIMATE REDUCTION
IN POPULATION BY THE BLACK DEATH IN
SOME COUNTIES * EACH FIGURE = 1000

CHAPTER 21

RICHARD II AND THE PEASANTS' REVOLT

EDWARD III, who had begun the Hundred Years' War in France with a series of victories, lived to be an old man and to see his son Edward (the 'Black Prince') die before him, England stricken with the Black Death, and threatened by the French fleet, which had taken to burning and sacking the Channel ports Edward III
1327

When Edward III died he was succeeded by the Black Prince's son, Richard II, who was still a boy. For some years already, the King being old and sick, the country had been ruled by Richard's uncle, John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster. Constant quarrels were going on in which Parliament played an important part, generally acting against John of Gaunt. A month or two after the young King came to the throne the French began to threaten England seriously, captured the Isle of Wight, and landed an army in Sussex Richard II
1377

They were soon forced to retreat, but the amount of money that had been spent on the war was becoming a nightmare to the King's advisers and to Parliament, still they would not make peace. At a Parliament which met at Nottingham in the November of 1380 a dismal tale was told. The wages of the King's garrisons in towns on the French coast had not been paid, the troops were on the point of deserting, and the King was 'outrageously indebted'. The Speaker¹ asked what was No Money
Parliament

¹ The Speaker of the House of Commons was then its chief. His work was rather like that of the chairman of a committee.

the exact sum that had to be raised, and added that he hoped it was not very large because the people 'were very poor and of feeble estate to bear more burdens'

Poll-tax
decided on

The King's ministers asked for £160,000. The Commons declared this was far too much, but that if the clergy would raise a third part of the money, then a total of £10,000 could be raised by a poll-tax—that is, a tax on each man, woman and child.

II

Serfs and
Villeins no
better off

If what happened next is to be understood, the reader must look again at the description of how the serfs and villeins lived, given on pages 5 and 6 of Chapter 10. Magna Carta had done nothing for them. At the time we have reached, most of the people of England were little better off than they had been three hundred years earlier, but were still serfs who had to work so many days a week for nothing on their lord's land, who could not leave their villages, and who had to ask their lord's permission and pay him money if they so much as wanted to apprentice their sons to a trade, or let their daughters marry. In every little detail of their lives they were under the lord's or his bailiff's orders: must grind their corn at the lord's mill, however much the miller cheated them,

Might not
sell a cow

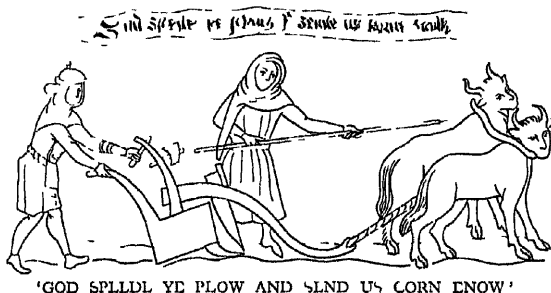
By 1500 this
had changed

and might not sell a cow without leave. But in the England of a hundred and fifty years later (about the year 1500) all that had been changed. The great majority of people still worked on the land, but only a very few of them were serfs. Most of them were free, and got their living either by working for wages, or by farming lands for which they paid rent in money. This great change was by far the most important thing that happened in England in the later Middle Ages. It happened much earlier in England than in most countries. In France serfs still existed when the Revolution broke out in 1789, in Russia the serfs were not freed until 1861.

Cause of
change

How did the change come about in England? Two things happened to make it possible. First, the country

got enough silver to make into coin to use for all the money payments that had to be made if rents were no longer to be paid in labour (There was no copper or paper money, and the peasants were too poor ever to handle gold) Second, the peasants found people to Trade whom they could sell their crops for money Extra silver came into England when the soldiers brought home the silver plate and silver money which they stole Money from the French New money was brought in by the wool trade Markets for the peasants' crops were found Markets in the growing towns, and when England began to develop



an important cloth-weaving industry (during the fourteen hundreds), the weavers had to be supplied with food Trade and industry were both working to set the peasant free

The serfs wanted to be free because labour rents were obviously a nuisance The serf often had no time to cultivate his own ground and had to work first for his lord at critical times such as harvest Besides, every man wants to be free, and, as a writer of the thirteen hundreds puts it, 'among all wretchedness and woe, the condition of bondage and serfdom is most wretched' But why, in the end, did the Lords of the Manor agree to the changes?

Why Serfs
 wanted to be
 free

Why did the Lords agree in the end ? They had several reasons. Some saw that they got better work from paid labourers than from unwilling tenants, and took money from the tenants to pay labourers. Others changed because of the growth of the wool trade. Sheep-farming was now profitable, and for raising sheep a lord did not want a lot of tenants each turning up on a few days each week, but a few shepherds who would work regularly.

As soon as a tenant stopped working on his lord's land, his lord at once became far less interested in keeping him at home. So we find many serfs buying their freedom, some who could not buy it, simply ran away. By about the year 1500, as has been said, most men were legally free. But before this process was completed there was terrible friction and trouble. Lords were often slow to free their serfs. Nor did freed serfs always find themselves out of all their difficulties. Some who became simple labourers either in the town or country found themselves up against the problem that always faces men who work for wages. They had to struggle hard to keep their wages high enough to buy them a living.

III

Trouble between rich and poor (about 1341) When the poor demanded better wages the rich began to grumble. This was the sort of thing that rich men were saying all over England.

The world goeth fast from bad to worse when shepherd and cowherd demand more for their labour than the master-bailiff was wont to take. Labourers of old were not wont to eat of wheaten bread, their meat was of beans or coarser corn, and their drink of water alone. Cheese and milk were a feast to them, their dress was of hoddon grey, then was the world ordered aught for folk of this sort. Ha! age of ours, whither turnest thou?

From grumbling the rich went on to passing laws to keep wages down.

Shortage of Labour Prices and wages had already been rising even before the Black Death, and the shortage of labour which

followed it made them rise even higher. In June 1349 the King, Edward III, and his council ordered that no man should give or take higher wages than had been paid in 1346. In 1350, and on several other occasions, Parliament passed laws to the same effect. These laws were also supposed to keep prices down, but this they did not succeed in doing. Statutes of Labourers 1349

The people were irritated by this and by the new poll-tax. There were riots in the country and strikes in the town. Serfs ran away and banded themselves together in the forests. The judges declared that these runaways were 'outlaws' whom anyone might kill if he could. Agitators went about preaching what we should now call socialism. One of them was John Ball, a priest. His text was Riots Robin Hood's followers

When Adam delved and Eve span
Who was then the gentleman?

For nearly twenty years he had been wandering through the country talking and preaching in words like these

Ah, ye good people, the matters goeth not well to pass in England, nor shall not do till everything be common and that there be no villeins nor gentlemen. What have we deserved or why should we be kept thus in serfage? We be all come from one father and one mother, Adam and Eve, wherby can they say or show that they be greater lords than we be, saving by that they cause us to win and labour for what they spend? They are clothed in velvet and fine cloth furred with ermine and we be vested with poor cloth, they have their wines, spices and good bread, and we have the rye, the bran, and the straw, and drink water. They dwell in fair houses and we have rain and wind in the fields, and by that that cometh of our labours they keep and maintain their estates. 'We come from one Father and Mother'

What the peasants wanted was freedom for all serfs and villeins and to have the land to till at a moderate rent. Wat Tyler and a man who called himself Jack Straw were other peasant leaders, and there were many townsmen who sympathized with them. They formed, in secret, a union called 'The Great Society'. The leaders met in London, and, since many of the citizens were What the Peasants demanded

friendly, their plan was to summon all the members of the Great Society who lived in the counties round about to march upon the city. Then they would force the King, his ministers, and Parliament, to agree to their demands. What had not been arranged was exactly when the signal for revolt was to be given.

IV

Collecting the Poll-tax In the March of 1381 the King's tax-gatherers went round to collect the poll-tax (see page 96). But when the money was counted up in Westminster it became plain that the collectors had not brought in nearly the whole of the money that was expected. Fresh collectors were therefore sent out to each district.

The peasants thought that an attempt was being made to collect an entirely new tax. Some said that there was fraud and that the King never got the money at all. Secret messengers were sent round by the leaders of the Great Society to say that the time had come.

Peasants' Revolt begins It was the third week in May and one of the tax-collectors had gone to Brentwood (a small town north-east of London) and summoned the people to pay what was still due. They said that they had paid already. When angry threatening crowds gathered, the tax-collector galloped off to London to complain to his masters. The men who had defied him took to the woods, or went to raise other villages. The revolt had begun, and in Kent also the peasants rose under Wat Tyler, and soon 'captured' the town of Canterbury. (Actually its gates were thrown open.) The 'rebels' made the Mayor and bailiffs of Canterbury take an oath of loyalty to young King Richard and the Commons. By the first days of June armies of peasants had collected in all the counties round London and began to march to the city.

Their Arms It was a strange army. They had sticks, rusty swords, old battle axes, worn-out bows and often only one arrow apiece. When the gentry did not fly they were not, as a rule, ill-treated unless they were already hated, and in

the eastern counties several gentlemen were among the leaders of the rebellion. Everywhere manor rolls and records on which the names of seifs were written were destroyed by the peasant armies. But they vowed loyalty to the boy King Richard and death to his wicked counsellors, and it was the King's banner—the banner of St George—that they planted in the camp at Blackheath outside south London, on the first of the four decisive days of the rising.

The
Peasants
encamp
before
London

Once more John Ball preached a sermon to his followers—God, he said, had created all men equal, serfdom had



This shows a wounded knight being pushed home in a wheelbarrow

been invented by proud and sinful men and was contrary to the law of God.

Inside the walls of London there was great anxiety. Many of the citizens were for the peasants, but, in the Tower, the King's ministers feared for their lives.

Ministers
terrified

The peasants were anxious too. They were not a regular army with supplies and baggage. If they could not get their demands within a day or two they would never get them, for the hungry armies would begin to drift away, and it was only because of their numbers that the rulers might listen to them. In London there was no news. No one could get in or out. In the evening the King's mother suddenly arrived at the Tower.

Peasants'
dilemma

The King's Mother allowed into London How had she and her ladies managed to get through, asked the frightened courtiers? The peasants had let her pass, saying they had not come to make war on women but to demand their rights

Citizens and apprentices who were on the side of the peasants knew how necessary it was for them to get into London immediately. Walworth the Mayor and most of the Corporation were against them. But it so happened that the Alderman in charge of Southwark bridge—part of which was a drawbridge—was for the peasants, and this is how they got into London.

Next morning a messenger came to the peasant leaders, saying that the King would meet the peasants at Mile End, then a meadow outside the walls.

There the King and the peasants met, and the King at once agreed to their chief demands. Serfdom was to be abolished and peasants were to be allowed to hire the land they wanted at fourpence an acre, and there was to be a general pardon for all who had taken part in the rebellion.

Freedom and Pardon As a further proof of his protection [writes Mr. Tieveyan (from whose account this story of the four days is taken)] Richard gave the representative of each county present a royal banner under which they could thenceforth march with the law on their side. Thirty clerks were at once set to work to draw up the charters of liberation and pardon for every shire, village, and manor. The exulting peasants then poured back into town through Aldgate, their King whom they had conquered in their midst.

Attack on the Tower But during, or just after, the conference at Smithfield another band of peasants broke (or were let) into the Tower. Here they found and killed some of the men they had been looking for—important ministers who had, they believed, long been their enemies.

There were disreputable doings that night. While most of the rebels returned home satisfied, as soon as their charters of freedom and their pardons had been copied out by the clerks, some of the peasants and some

apprentices and citizens of London began to kill and burn in the quarter where the Flemish traders lived. Several hundred perished. On Saturday morning there were still thousands of peasants in and about London. Some of them were only waiting for the clerks to finish copying, but some were men who declared that they were not satisfied. They began to think that, as soon as the peasant army had gone, there would be no one to see that the

Attack on the
Flemings

Some
Peasants
doubted



BEGGARS CARRYING CHILDREN

Notice the curious hoods worn by the second group—also the man's bare feet and leggings

King kept his promises. It seems that they had no clear plan as to how to manage this difficult part of the business, it is certain that they did not think that Parliament would act for them.

The Court party wanted above all to get rid of them, and another meeting was arranged, this time at Smithfield. The rebels, led by Wat Tyler, carried the royal banners that had been given them at Mile End. Wat Tyler left his followers and rode across the open space that separated the peasants from the King and his party. No one heard what it was that he asked, but he seemed

Another
Conference

to be speaking in a familiar joking tone to the young King and contemptuously to the ministers and to the city rulers who sat their horses round him. In another moment swords were drawn, Wat Tyler struck at Mayor Walworth. But Walworth had armour under his official robes, struck back, and Wat Tyler was killed. His horse swerved and came dashing across the open square back to where the peasants stood, trailing its dead rider, and the peasants bent their bows and stood ready to let fly a hail of arrows. For a moment nobody moved. Then the young King rode alone across the square saying to the peasants, 'I am your leader!' The peasants believed him, and let him ride at their head out into the country. Richard had saved London for his friends. As the King rode out, the Mayor hurried to London for reinforcements, and coming back with a strong force of soldiers and with Wat Tyler's head on a pike, the last of the peasant army—now leaderless but for Richard—surrendered, and the King, rejoining the courtiers, rode joyfully back to the Tower.

Not more than a fortnight had passed before the peasants realized that King lords and Parliament, were in command again, that they would show no mercy, and that the boy who had said he would be their leader did not mean to keep the solemn promises of freedom and of pardon that he had given at Mile End. A new Lord Chief Justice, and the King himself, followed armies that went round the country putting down the last of the rebellion. The judge spared none who came before him for trial. Once a deputation of peasants came to remind the young King of his solemn promise. the King's answer was, 'Serfs you are, and serfs you shall remain.' For years there were small risings in towns and villages all over England.

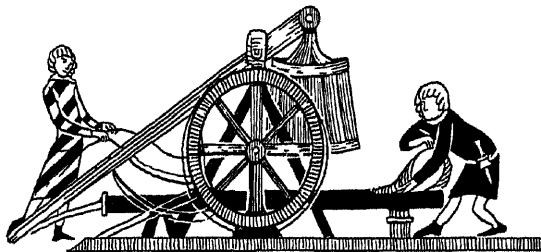
Mr Trevelyan sums up the result of the Peasants' Revolt by saying that their demands were right, and that when these had been granted it was a great pity for England that they were so shamefully withdrawn.

CHAPTER 22

MERCHANTS AND GUILDS

(1350 TO 1485)

THERE were by now many people in England (the citizens and apprentices of London, for instance, who were spoken of in the last chapter) who were traders and craftsmen, and who had nothing to do with the land at all. Numbers of such people were now to be found all over England, and they did not fit in with the feudal system.



This appears to be a primitive but complicated weighing machine, though it may be a sort of catapult.

The most important of the growing trades and industries of England was that of making and selling cloth. Most of the weavers lived in the country, but as trade grew they found that they had less and less time to give to farming. Townsmen too did less of the actual growing of their own food. In fact the work of the world was beginning to be split up. For a long time almost all the work of weaving fine cloth had been done in Flanders. Gradually townsmen in England began to

The Cloth
Trade grows

do this work also. Though a great deal of foreign trade was in the hands of foreigners, yet English merchants were growing in numbers and importance.

The Mediterranean trade was carried on by Italians, our modern word 'argosy' (meaning a large richly laden ship) is taken from the old word 'aragozy', which meant a ship from Ragusa, a town on the Adriatic. The trade with countries that border on the Baltic was mostly in the hands of Germans—members of the famous league of trading towns known as the Hanseatic League. But the important export trade in wool and half-finished cloth to the great manufacturing towns of Flanders was chiefly the business of Englishmen. A company of merchants known as 'The Staplers' sent wool to Calais, and from there it was redistributed to the weaving towns. Another company, known as 'The Merchants Adventurers', carried cloth to the great markets of Bruges. So during the last two hundred years of English mediæval history there appear a number of rich merchants and clothiers—as rich and important as the country gentry and, in some cases, as the great barons. From the time of the Hundred Years' War rich merchants were to be found in Parliament, and at different times they got acts passed to protect them from foreign competition. Merchants even held office as ministers of the King and some founded new noble families. For instance, William Grevil, ancestor of the Earls of Warwick, has an epitaph which calls him the 'flower of the wool merchants of all England'. Others had even greater claims to renown, such was William Caxton (about whom there is more in the next chapter). Best known of all—at least to boys and girls to-day—was Richard Whittington, famous then for his wealth and his work as Lord Mayor of London, and ever since as the hero of one of the best known of all English fairy and pantomime stories. He did not start life as a penniless boy, as the tale is now told. We cannot unfortunately be sure that he ever had a cat. He must have heard bells and seen milestones,

'An Argosy'

Wool Men
grow rich

About 1380
to 1480

Dick
Whittington

'but whether the bells ever told him to 'Turn again' we don't know But what is certain is that he really lived, was undoubtedly a rich merchant, and became three times Lord Mayor of London

Of the foreign trades, the wool trade was the most important, for English wool was essential for the making of the finer kinds of cloth, and it was a fit symbol of its



A WOOL MERCHANT AND HIS WIFE, 1407

importance that the seat of the Lord Chancellor in the House of Lords to this day is the Woolsack A certain 'The merchant had carved on his new house a motto which Woolsack' might have been that of several of the Kings of England

I thank God and ever shall
It is the sheep hath paid for all

To-day the traveller in the Cotswolds, from which most of the best wool came, can still see proofs of all Cotswold Villages this The beautiful Cotswold churches and stone houses

Fine Stained Glass were built by wool dealers The glass which John Tame, a wool merchant, brought from Flanders for his new church at Fairford is famous for its beauty all over Europe In these churches are magnificent brasses to the prosperous woolmen of bygone days If the traveller then crosses to the other side of England he can see in Suffolk and Essex the beautiful churches and houses built by the clothiers when the cloth industry first became prosperous

II

Guilds in London In all the larger mediæval towns there were a number of societies, or guilds, to which belonged the principal craftsmen of the place, each man joined the guild of his own trade By the end of the fifteenth century there were at least fifty of these societies in London Although the other towns of England were smaller, many of them had fifteen or twenty guilds and some even more The most important crafts—the butchers, bakers, weavers, shoemakers, tailors, glovers, coopers, smiths, carpenters, joiners, barbers and tanners—nearly always had separate guilds of their own, but some of the less important trades—arrow-makers, bow-makers, needle-makers—had to join together in order to get enough members to form one

Often most of the members of guild lived and worked together in the same neighbourhood, and in some old English towns it is still possible to tell from the street names where the old trades had their shops. In London, for example, there is Wood Street, Milk Street, Honey Lane, The Poultry, Bread Street, Ironmonger Lane, a Cordwainer (shoemaker) Street, an Old Fish Street, and a Needlers Lane Perhaps the reader can think of such names in his or her own town

Most guilds had a patron saint All through the year the guildsmen clubbed together to keep candles on the saint's altar, and on his or her feast day they would all go to a special service and have a big dinner for mem-

bers When a member was poor or sick or aged he might be given money from the guild funds If he died, all the members of his guild would go to his funeral and perhaps help his widow and children When members quarrelled, they often had to let the officers of their guild settle the dispute instead of taking it to the town courts

Guildsmen
helped each
other

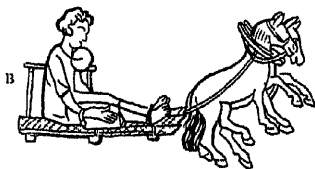


CRAFTSMEN

Builder, Watchman, Blacksmith and Butcher

But the real business of the guilds was to regulate the trade of the towns For in the Middle Ages no one believed in leaving traders to do what they liked Every town council had trading rules, and often the drawing up of these rules was left to the guild of the trade concerned, who also had to see they were kept.

Towns kept away people from outside
 What each town tried to do was to keep the town trade for members of the town guilds. Any Englishman from the country, or from another town, was called a foreigner! He might not sell his goods retail except on market days or at fair time. In order to stay in the town



THE BAKER'S GUILD WAS ONE OF THE FIRST

A Ovens like this are still in use in some places. People used to make their loaves at home, and send them out to be baked.

B A baker being dragged on a hurdle. As a punishment for selling short-weight bread, he has the load hung round his neck.

to work he had to get special permission in very much the same way as, say, an Italian or a German has to get special permission to work in England to-day. Just as the town council saw to it that no outsider should work in the town, so the guild saw to it that no non-guildsman should work at its particular trade.

In some ways the guild regulations were good. By refusing to admit anyone who had not served a seven-years' apprenticeship the guilds made sure that all their members were what they said they were — skilled workmen. But they

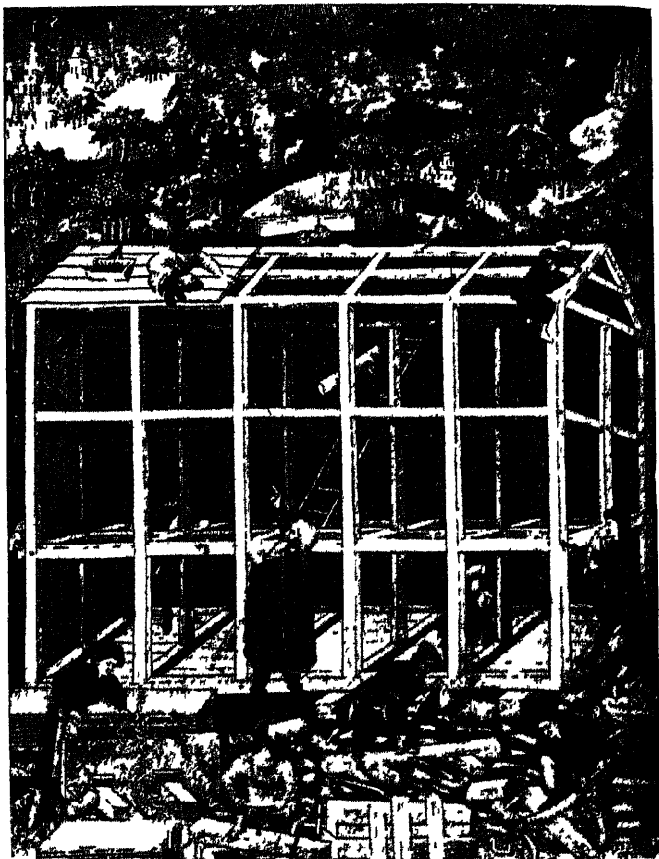
sometimes added very stiff rules that made it difficult for even a highly skilled man to set up on his own. For instance, when a man finished his apprenticeship he was sometimes asked to pay a big sum, or give the guild an expensive dinner, or make costly 'test pieces', before he was admitted. The idea of making a test piece was so that the man who wanted to come into the

Bad regulations

guild could show his skill. But where was a poor man to get the materials to make a piece of gold or silver plate, or a rich saddle, or a fine suit of clothes that no one had ordered? In the end Parliament passed an act limiting the charges that might be made.

One excellent thing was the great care which many guilds took to make sure that only good work should be done. From time to time the officers of the guild searched the shops of members and destroyed badly made wares. In the case of the food-trades punishment was usually given by the town magistrates as well—as a rule, the bad bread or meat was hung round the seller's neck and he was stood in the pillory for everyone to pelt, or sometimes he was dragged round the town on a hurdle. Guildsmen who persisted in turning out bad work were usually expelled from the guild altogether, which meant that they could not practise their trade in the town. Night work was forbidden in many places, for at night the guild officers could not search, and, by the flickering light of candles, good craftsmanship was impossible. Nor was a guildsman allowed to work in an attic or a cellar, he had to stay where he could be seen—'in halls and shops next the road in sight of the people'.

These regulations, of course, protected not only the customer from faulty goods but also the guildsman from unfair competition from each other. Other rules were often made for the same purpose. Minimum wages were sometimes fixed—a guildsman might not be paid less than so much—so that no master might take advantage of unusually cheap labour. Sometimes prices were fixed also to prevent underselling. No man might employ more than so many apprentices and wage-earners. It was also strictly forbidden to entice away another guildsman's customers or workmen, or to buy up an unfair share of raw materials—leather, wool, iron or whatever it might be. In fact, the guild as a whole sometimes bought its materials and shared them among its members. Sometimes these regulations worked well, sometimes not.



A MEDIAEVAL PICTURE OF NOAH BUILDING THE ARK
Notice the much more advanced tools than those on p 25. Timber
houses were built in this way

so well Wages were sometimes fixed too low to give a decent living to the workers Prices were sometimes fixed so high that the town council had to complain But on the whole they were good

Amusement was thought important too, and the guildsmen acted the plays of the time During the Middle Ages there were no proper theatres (and, naturally, no cinemas) Earlier than the time we are speaking of, plays were sometimes acted by the clergy in church, in order to help people who could not read to learn and remember stories out of the Bible, but in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the chief players were the guildsmen They too did religious plays, each craft acting a different Bible story At York, the Armourers showed how Adam and Eve were driven out of Eden with a sword, the Shipwrights showed the building of Noah's ark, and the Fishermen and Mariners acted the Flood Such plays were called 'mystery' plays, not because there was anything mysterious about them, but from the French word 'mystere', meaning a craft The Coventry, Chester and Townley plays became so famous that visitors flocked to see them

Mystery and
Miracle Play

Noah's Ark

Plays were often acted on big carts These were drawn about the city by horses and each guild repeated its scene at various stopping-places Sometimes the carts were built in three storeys The top one would represent Heaven and carry God and His angels, the middle one would be the earth and its people, the bottom one might be Hell or simply closed in as a dressing-room The plays were often amusing A great deal of fun was got out of beating or cheating the Devil, and there were always comic characters In nearly all the plays about the Flood, for example, Mrs Noah laughs at her husband for building a boat so far in land Even when it begins to rain she refuses to get into the Ark and has to be carried in kicking and struggling In the York play her sons beg her

A Cart as
Stage

Mrs Noah

Mother we pray you altogether
For we are here your own childer
Come into the ship for fear of the weather !

CHAPTER 23

CHAUCER, CAXTON AND THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

(1340 TO 1491)

The English Language 'ENGLAND for the English' is a slogan which has already once before appeared in this history

Under Henry III foreign favourites at Court, and foreign clergy in the Church, became unpopular because they only came to England to get money. We have also spoken of the advantages which came to England from peaceful contact with men of other nations, how foreign trade, and learning from abroad, were the means of bringing in new inventions and increasing the wealth of the country, how learning grew, because learned men all spoke Latin as well as their own language.

Going back a little, say 1325 Just before the time which has been reached in this history, French and Latin were the two languages chiefly used by educated English people, and it seemed as if English might cease to be a written language at all. This does quite often happen—a spoken language does not die, but nobody knows how to write it. For instance, in Italy to-day the country people and poorer people in the towns do not talk Italian at home. In each district and town there is a different dialect—the remains of an old way of speaking.

English might have died out This might easily have happened to English—one way of talking in Yorkshire, and another in Sussex, and this book and all your other lessons in French. About 1325 English had not been fashionable for many years. But as we know, English did not die out—far from it—

instead it was brought up to date with a lot of new words, and was soon being used for their work by some of the best living poets and writers. One of the men who helped to rescue the language was a learned church-man named Wycliffe, who translated the Bible into English. Others were William Langland and Geoffrey Chaucer.

The reader of early tales written in English will notice that they are nearly all in verse. For a long time people preferred to tell stories in this way, partly because copies of books were scarce and it is much easier to remember verse by heart. But it is most inconvenient to write histories, or geographies, or books of science in verse (though it has often been done). But at this time verse was the right way of writing tales, and prose was for serious books. Chaucer, for instance, always wrote his stories in verse, but when he wrote a little book on science for his son Lois (who was ten) he wrote in prose.

One of the most popular books of this time was called *The Vision of Piers the Plowman* by Langland. It tells how a poor ploughman sees in a dream 'a great field full of folk' and meets with such characters as 'Hunger' and 'Riches' and talks with them. Hunger asks the ploughman for a meal, and Piers explains how poor he is.

'I have no penny,' quoth Piers, 'young pullets to buy,
Nor bacon nor geese, only two green cheeses,
Some curds and some cream, and an oaten cake,
Two bean loaves with brian, just baked for my children
And I say, by my soul, I have no salt bacon,
Nor eggs, by my Christendom, collops to make,
Only onions and parsley, and cabbage-like plants,
Eke a cow, and a calf, and an old cart-mare
To draw afield dung, while the drought shall prevail
By such food must we live, till Lammas-time come,
I hope I may have then some harvest afield,
And I'll give thee a dinner, as dearly will please me.'

Geoffrey Chaucer was a great poet and did more to make English the fashion. He is often called the 'Father of English Poetry'. Many poets who came

after called him their master, and indeed none of them for nearly two hundred years (except perhaps the Scottish poet, William Dunbar) wrote half so well

Canterbury Tales 1387 In 1387 Chaucer, already a successful author, began his celebrated *Canterbury Tales*. The poem begins with a description of how delighted everyone feels when the long dark winter is over. The natural thing to do in the spring is to go on a pilgrimage—to join a lot of other people and visit the shrine of a saint—with bells on your horses and bagpipes under your arm. Chaucer describes



SQUIRE



CHAUCER



PRIOR

how, staying the night at the Tabard Inn in Southwark, he found that he was one of thirty men and women who were all going,

The holy blissful martyr for to seek

That them hath holpen when that they were sick

Harry
Bailly's
suggestion

That evening, at supper, Harry Bailly the innkeeper suggests that they would all enjoy their long ride much better if they had a story-telling competition on the way—the prize to be a fine dinner at the Tabard on the last day of the pilgrimage, and to this they agree.

The people who are going on the pilgrimage are all most amusingly described (see the pictures on these two pages).

The 'Wife of
Bath'

There is a stout, handsome citizeness who comes from Bath, a very genteel Prioress who has several little dogs

about whose food she is very particular, a brawny miller, a man who keeps the sort of cook shop which is described in Chapter 15, a Knight, his son a young Esquire (very smart in embroidered clothes cut in the latest fashion and with fair curly hair), a sea captain, a villain of a friar, a very good and gentle parish priest, two or three lawyers of different sorts (none too honest), and several nuns. The story that ought (in the present writers' opinion) to have got the prize ¹ is told by a priest whose special work it is to say masses for a convent of nuns. This

'Nun's
Priest's
Tale'



KNIGHT



OXFORD SCHOLAR



WIFE OF BATH

tale is about a splendid cock called Chantecleer who, with his favourite hen, Dame Partelote, belongs to a poor widow

His comb was redder than the fine coral
And battled as it were a castle wall
His bill was black, and as the jet it shon
Like azure were his legges and his toen
His nailes whiter than the lily flower
And like the burnished gold was his colour ²

Chantecleer

One night, just before dawn, Chantecleer is wakened

¹ Chaucer never completed the poem, so perhaps he meant it to

² Say cor/all, legg/és, nail/és and toe-en. They had an *e* at the end of a great many words and often pronounced it

by a terrible dream He dreamed (he tells Dame Partelote) that he was walking as usual in the yard when he saw a beast rather like a hound—

The Red
Beast

His colour was betwixt yellow and red
And tipped was his tail and both his ears
With black, unlike the remnant of his hairs
His snout was small with glowing eyes tway

Chantecleer is sure that the dream means no good !
Dame Partelote is annoyed with him

I cannot love a coward by my faith !

Partelote says
indigestion

How ridiculous, says she, to be frightened of a dream
What is wrong with Chantecleer, she tells him, is simply
indigestion, and she gives him some medicine He is
much annoyed ! After she has scolded him and told him
that she will not love him any more if he goes on being
afraid, he at last cheers up and flies down off the perch
as usual, and proudly roams up and down the yard, all
the while singing

Chantecleer
cheerful
again

Merrier than the mermaid in the sea !

But alas ! just then up started just such a beast as he had
The Fox dreamed of ! The fox (for it was he) with sweet words
begged Chantecleer not to be afraid ! He had only come
because Chantecleer sang so beautifully ! Won't he
delight him *just* once again ? Chantecleer is taken in,
stands on his toes, stretches his neck, shuts his eyes,
and begins to crow ! At the first note the fox seizes
him and carries him off

In the end Chantecleer gets away, and the story ends
happily

II

Word of mouth did quite well for many stories, but
when they were really told well—as Chaucer told them—
The very or whenever it was a question of anything that must be
words exactly right, then people wanted the very words This

- meant that quite a large number of people were employed in the writing out of books—sometimes on parchment Paper made of sheepskin, sometimes on paper (which had only just begun to be made in quantity but was much cheaper) But at last people in Europe began to imitate and to improve a way of copying books that had been invented in the East This new method was printing The art Printing of printing had been known for a long time in India and China, but it became important in Europe only when

**If it plesse any man spirital or temporal to buye any
pces of two and thre comemoracions of Salisburi use
enpryntid after the forme of this prelet lettre whiche
ben wel and truly correct, lette hym come to westmos-
nester in to the almonestre at the reed pale and he shal
haue them good chepe .x.**

Supplico flet cedula

CAXTON'S ADVTISIEMENT

'It it please any man spirituaill or temporal to buy any pces of two and thre comemoracions of Salisburi use unprinted after the form of this prelet lettre which ben well and truly correct, let him come to Westminster into the almony at the Red Pale and he shall have them good cheap'

movable type was invented; that is to say, when words could be set up letter by letter Type was very expensive Movable to make, for metal type had to be cast But once each Type letter was made separately, when one book was printed the type could all be 'broken up' into 'pce' (separate letters) again and used for another book The first European printing presses were in Germany and Italy Italy and But in 1474 a printing press was brought to London Germany by a man named William Caxton. His story is worth reading, for it tells a great deal about the life of the time

III

William Caxton 1422
 Caxton a Cloth Merchant 1453
 Merchant Adventurers' 63

He was born in Kent more than twenty years after Chaucer's death and was apprenticed by his father to a London mercer and cloth merchant. He was sent to Bruges to work under an official of the Mercers' Company. When he was out of his apprenticeship he set up in trade on his own. He did his work so well that after a while he became governor of the English 'Merchant Adventurers' in Bruges.



FOX AND GRAPES

One of the first 'printed book illustrations' to Caxton's *Book of Fables*

In Bruges he lived in what was called 'The English House', where each merchant had his own bedroom, and where they all ate in a common dining-room. The rules were very strict, each member of the Guild must sleep in the house, and must be in by a certain time in the evening. This way of living was general for all merchants trading in foreign countries. It was Caxton's duty as Governor to decide quarrels between the merchants or the captains of the ships that carried the trade.

His Life in Bruges
 His work as Guild Governor

Letters from the Company in London or from the Government came to him. He had to see that the bales of cloth were of the proper weight and that the cloth in them was of the right length and breadth.

After he had done this work for over twenty years, Caxton took service with a princess, the Duchess of Burgundy, sister of Edward IV. She owned 'ships of merchandise' and Caxton was her adviser in trade. All the time that he lived in Bruges, and especially when he was working for the Duchess, Caxton used his spare time to translate novels and tales from French into English. One particular book, *The Histories of Troye*, turned out a great success, and the demand for his translation became greater than could be supplied. Caxton says that his hand grew 'weary and not steadfast' with so much writing, and his eyes 'Dymed with overmuch loking on the white paper'.

It was then that he decided to learn from one Colard Mansion, who lived in Bruges, the new art of printing. It was as a printer and translator and no longer as a cloth merchant that Caxton came back to England and set up the first printing press in Westminster. The books for whose printing Caxton is chiefly famous are Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and Sir Thomas Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*. The *Morte d'Arthur* was a re-telling from the French and in courtly language (and with a good many of what were then modern ideas) of the old fireside legends of King Arthur and his Knights. The old tales were often homely, but Malory's are full of distressed damsels, knightly vows, vigils and contests. What is curious is that this was one of the first books to be printed here. Printing was one of many new inventions and new ways of doing old things that was bringing the end of the feudal period, and here, when Knighthood was nearly at its end, the printing press was helping to make known one of the best accounts that exists of the better side of Feudalism and Chivalry.

He became
Commercial
Adviser to
Princess

A successful
Novel

Caxton
learns
Printing

First
Printing
Press in
England
1476

Printing the
*Morte
d'Arthur*

CHAPTER 24

THE END OF THE MIDDLE AGES— WYCLIFFE—THE WARS OF THE ROSES (1400 TO 1485)

IN the last three chapters were described three ways in which England was changing. The serfs and villeins were winning their freedom, craftsmen and merchants were becoming important people, churchmen were no longer the only people who had any education, and English had begun to be used by the best writers, printed, and read.

The Church
1400-1450

The Church was beginning too to change, but in a way that was making it more and more unpopular in England. The Church now owned nearly a third of all the land in the kingdom. But besides this, every estate and every man on every estate had to pay Church dues—a tithe (one-tenth) of all the harvest, one beast in every ten, and many other dues as well. Many of the nobles and gentry had always been jealous of the Church's great wealth. What was new was that many of the best of the clergy, the most learned as well as the best of the poor parish priests, thought that the Church's money was going to the wrong churchmen. The Church was rich, but the priests who really tried to teach religion, held services for the poorer people, and christened, married and buried them, were often miserably poor.

A rich
Church and
poor Priests

Ever since the reign of Henry III the Popes had been very eager to raise money, and often they sold the highest posts in the Church to rich and ambitious priests. The Orders of the Friars had been founded because many

pious people thought Christian priests ought to be poor, yet now even the friars had become worldly. Also the Popes now had another way of raising money that disgusted good Christians very much. Chaucer was not a specially pious man, but he was shocked by the doings of a new kind of priest called a Pardoner. Pardoners were sent from Rome to give pardons for sin. It was a good deed to give money to the Church; good deeds made up for bad ones, so that what it sometimes amounted to was that forgiveness for sin was sold. Friars had become worldly

Worst of all, there were serious disputes in Rome itself. In fact for nearly forty years (between 1378 and 1417) there were actually two and, at one moment, three Popes at a time—because the cardinals would not agree who was to be elected. Each Pope claimed to be the true Pope and abused the others. Some good Christians wondered if there ought to be a Pope at all? Rival Popes

It was in 1378 that John Wycliffe, a famous Oxford scholar, began to write about the way the Church was governed. He said that its faults came from its being too rich, and that he could find nothing in the Bible about the necessity of obeying a Pope, or even having one. Later he went on to say that he believed that the Church had changed Christ's teaching in many ways, and that Christians ought to study the Bible, so he and his followers undertook the great work of translating the whole Bible into English. He soon had a great following and trained preachers to spread his ideas through the country. These preachers and those who believed in them were generally called Lollards. Wycliffe, 1320-1384

If the kings and nobles had supported Wycliffe, a great blow might have been struck at the power of the Church. But the kings preferred to keep in with the Popes and refused to enforce two statutes to check the Pope's powers which were passed by Parliament in 1351 and 1353. The barons would not support Wycliffe because they suspected that the Lollards had helped to stir up

King and the Peasants' Revolt So the Lollards were persecuted
 Barons and their teachings were forbidden Some of the
 against Lollardy Lollard preachers were burnt, and the Church kept its
 Lollards persecuted Ages But the persecution did not alter the real feelings
 of the people Later when a king (Henry VIII) at last
 had a serious quarrel with the Pope, he was able—partly
 because of the work the Lollards had already done—to
 sweep the Catholic Church out of power in England
 without very much trouble and to take the lands of the
 monasteries

II

Parliament During all these years, the power of the House of
 Commons was slowly growing For as has been seen,
 the middle classes were gradually becoming richer and
 more important, and the need for money to pay for the
 Hundred Years' War forced the kings to take notice of
 Commons what they said The Commons began to sit apart from
 the Lords, as they do to-day Their consent became
 necessary for the passing of laws and the levying of
 taxes (as it is now), and the Commons got the right of
 introducing bills which were sometimes passed into law
 Although they were still much weaker than either the
 King or the barons, yet the rights which they now got
 they never lost, and these rights later proved extremely
 important But Parliament was not yet strong enough
 to take over the work of ruling the country

III

'Law and Order' And yet by the middle of the thirteen hundreds, the
 'ceasing to work' system of 'law and order' which kings such as Henry II
 and Edward I had established was working badly The
 reader has seen how many things had happened that made
 England a country that was less and less easy to rule in
 A changing England the old way The Black Death, the growth of the towns
 and trade, and the heavy taxes needed to pay for wars
 led to the Peasants' Revolt, and later to a great change

in the way the land was used, and in the position of the men who cultivated it. Then there was dissatisfaction with the Church, and above all there were now, as a ruling class, nobles and gentry who had spent their lives—as had their fathers before them—fighting in France. These great people, and the men-at-arms who followed them, found it very difficult to settle down to a peaceful life.

Nobles us
to violence



SOME EXTREMELY FASHIONABLE NOBLES (ABOUT 1450)

at home. They had become used to murder and lawlessness in France and they refused to leave off such ways of settling things when they sailed for England.

IV

The reader will remember how Richard II (then a boy) ^{Kings} behaved when the peasants rose in revolt, and will not be surprised that he never succeeded in keeping the nobles in check. Nor were his successors more successful, and for one hundred and eighty years it happened that there were kings on the throne of England who were either bad, mad, or too weak to keep the jealous nobles in order. From the time of Richard II murders in

Murder becomes common 1377-1485

politics became common. Unpopular ministers and unsuccessful rebels were often executed, sometimes without trial. Richard II (1373 to 1399), Henry VI (1399 to 1413), Edward V (1483) were all murdered, Richard III (1483 to 1485) was killed in battle. And the keeping of law and order was made more and more difficult by the growth of a custom known as 'livery and maintenance'.

'Livery and Maintenance'

As violence became more common, great lords set up private armies of their own, and enrolled the gentry of the neighbourhood under their banners. These people were called the lord's 'retainers'. They wore his 'livery', or a badge with his coat of arms on it, and promised to turn out and fight or bully for him when necessary. In return he promised to 'maintain' them in their own affairs whether they were right or not. This is the sort of thing that happened. If a retainer of any great lord were brought before a law court on any charge, he simply appealed to his lord, who immediately sent along a body of armed men to overawe the jury. If the case was one between the retainers of two different lords, then the verdict usually went to the one who could get the bigger body of men sent to his assistance, and who therefore looked most like winning if the case ended in a free fight. Justice often became a farce, and many a country gentleman seems to have lost part of his lands unjustly to some powerful lord.

Justice becomes a farce

Too big a Royal Family

The kings found too that their own position had been weakened by the results of the family policy of Edward III. Edward had had a number of children, and had tried to strengthen the royal house by marrying each daughter to some great noble and by making each son a great and wealthy baron. This seemed an excellent idea, but some years after his death it proved to be disastrous. For now discontented barons, instead of simply trying to get control over an unpopular king (as barons had done in the time of Magna Carta or under Simon de Montfort), put themselves under the leadership

of one or other of Edward III's descendants and helped him to claim the throne

The first result of this sort of trouble came in 1399, when Richard II was deposed and murdered by his cousin, Henry Duke of Lancaster. He was the son of John of Gaunt and became king as Henry IV. But the worst did not come until later after the end of the Hundred Years' War in 1453. Henry V had been very popular and had gained many victories. But when war went against England Henry VI was blamed for the inglorious defeats abroad.

Richard II
murdered
1399

Henry V,
1413-1422
Henry VI,
1422-1461

Two years after the war with France ended, there broke out the famous Wars of the Roses. They took their name from a struggle for the throne that went on between two branches of the family of Edward III. On one side were the Lancastrians, or descendants of the Duke of Lancaster, and they took as their emblem the red rose. On the other side were the Yorkists, or descendants of the Duke of York, and their badge was the white rose. All the important barons and their followers joined in, but many seem to have done so more because they wanted to fight their own private enemies than because they cared who was king. As they had in the times of Stephen, men often changed sides, and any question of general principles soon disappeared altogether. The great mass of the people, the townsmen and the peasants, do not seem to have cared for anything except to protect themselves and their possessions from the nobles and professional soldiers who chased each other about the country. In this they seem to have been fairly successful. Most of them certainly never took sides at all.

Wars of the
Roses
1455

Lancaster
Red
York
White

Townsmen
and
Peasants try
to keep out
of it

V

The details of the story are extremely difficult to understand—so difficult that it hardly seems worth the effort to disentangle them thoroughly. The bare outline even is confusing. At first the Lancastrians managed

A confusing
story

to keep Henry VI on the throne, but in 1461 he was imprisoned, and the Duke of York became king, as Edward IV. Henry was restored in 1471, but later in



A SUIT OF ARMOUR FOR MAN AND HORSE (ABOUT 1460)

Edward IV,
1461-1483

Princes
murdered in
the Tower

the same year Edward defeated his supporters, murdered Henry and got the throne back. Edward's own young sons, Edward V and his brother, were murdered in the Tower by their uncle Richard, the Duke of Gloucester,

who thereupon took the crown as Richard III ('Crouch-back') Two years later, in 1485, Richard himself was defeated and killed by the Lancastrian Henry Tudor at Bosworth, and his conqueror became king as Henry VII

Richard III
Henry VII,
1485

The legend is that after the battle was won Henry found the crown of England hanging on a thorn-bush and put it on. Whether this really happened or not, the tale is a good one. Henry Tudor did not mind scratching his hand, and once the crown was on his head was the sort of man who would see that it stayed there—and his head on his shoulders too.













Battle of
Bosworth

There was one good feature about the whole struggle. The number of great nobles was limited, and though there was not much general destruction in the Wars of the Roses there was a great death-roll among the nobles themselves. The leaders fought in heavy armour, once down they were helpless and were generally killed, for the two sides showed each other no mercy. Their lands passed either to the King or to children who were too young to fight. From 1300 to about 1350 there had been nearly a hundred great English nobles, at the end of the reign of Edward IV there were less than fifty (1483), and Henry VII found that the handful left after the battle of Bosworth were far weaker than he was. He was an able man, he took his opportunity and put an end to the old struggle between the nobility and the Crown, but that is another story and must wait, along with that of many great changes that were happening in the world, for Volume III.



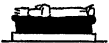
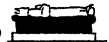

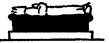


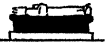
Death-roll
among the
Nobles

(See p. 132 for 'Points to Notice about Part IV')

TABLE OF KINGS

 NORMANS	1066	WILLIAM 1st 'The Conqueror' died in France 1087	
	1087	His Son WILLIAM 2nd 'Rufus' Killed while hunting 1100	
	1100	HENRY 1st "Beauclerc" (brother of William Rufus) died 1135	
	1135	STEPHEN (nephew of Henry 1st Fought MATILDA daughter of Henry) died 1154	
 PLANTAGENETS	1154	HENRY 2nd "Plantagenet" (Son of MATILDA) died 1189	
	1189	RICHARD 1st "Cœur de Lion" (Son of Henry 2nd) died of wounds 1199	
	1199	JOHN (brother to Richard 1st) died in 1216 "of a surfelt"	
	1216	HENRY 3rd (Son of John) died 1272	
	1272	EDWARD 1st "Longshanks" (Son of Henry 3rd) died on a journey 1307	
	1307	EDWARD 2nd (Son of Edward 1st) dethroned and murdered 1327	

AND THEIR DATES

PLANTAGENETS	1327	EDWARD 3rd (Son of Edward 2nd) died 1377	
	1377	RICHARD 2nd (Grandson of Edward 3rd) dethroned, probably murdered, 1399	
LANCASTRIANS	1399	HENRY 4th "Lancaster" (cousin of Richard 2nd) died 1413	
	1413	HENRY 5th (Son of Henry 4th) died 1422 (his widow, Katherine, married Owen Tudor)	
	1422	HENRY 6th (Son of Henry 5th) dethroned 1461 and murdered 1471	
	1461	EDWARD 4th "York" (Great-great Grandson of Edward 3rd) died 1483	
YORKISTS	1483	EDWARD 5th (Son of Edward 4th) murdered with his brother in the Tower reigned about 2 months	
	1483	RICHARD 3rd (brother of Edward 4th) Killed in battle 1485	
TUDORS	1485	HENRY 7th "Tudor" (Grandson of Katherine Henry 5th's widow, Great-great-great Grandson of Edward 3rd) died 1509	

POINTS TO NOTICE ABOUT PART IV (1307-1485)

- 1 In this period change becomes more rapid
- 2 During most of the beginning of this time we were at war with France (the Hundred Years' War)
- 3 This war, the growth of trade, and the Black Death led to a shortage of men to cultivate the land that the shortage and a rise in prices led to a demand for higher wages
- 4 This was resisted (Statute of Labourers, 1349) and that in 1381 the peasants revolted, and unsuccessfully demanded the abolition of serfdom and villeinage
- 5 Though this demand was not successful at the time, and the rising itself failed, yet by the end of the period nearly all the peasants in England were free
- 6 The merchants and craftsmen of nearly all towns in Europe were organized into Guilds which were self-governing and often very powerful, and the wool and cloth trades were the most important in England
- 7 During this time the idea of 'England for the English' first became popular, and after about 1340 the English language replaced Norman-French at the Court and even began to be used instead of Latin as the language of learned men
- 8 Chaucer, Wycliffe and Caxton were celebrated names that are associated with this change, and Caxton's story is also a good example of the working of the merchant Guilds
- 9 Events and changes in the period between 1400 and 1485 showed that the end of the Middle Ages in England was not far off
- 10 Towards the end of the period a series of kings who were not able to keep a strong central government going, led to the usual revolts among the nobles becoming serious
- 11 These revolts developed into 'The Wars of the Roses' and led to an extraordinary reduction in the numbers and importance of the great nobles
- 12 The reign of Henry VII begins a period when in England the kings definitely won in their struggle against both the nobles and the Church
- 13 The sources from which the history of this period is known are Chronicles, Charters, Acts of Parliament, books of poetry and prose written in English, and also private letters

VOLUME III

1485-1800

PART I

CHAPTER 25

NEW WORLDS AND THE ARTS AND SCIENCES IN EUROPE

(ABOUT 1400 TO 1540)

DISCOVERIES were being made between the years fourteen and fifteen hundred that changed all the ideas that men had ever had about the world and its size. Up to that time the only countries that were really known to Europeans were in Europe itself, or close by on the coasts of the continents that lay on the other sides of the Mediterranean. Beyond, lay the uncrossed ocean, the deserts of Africa, and the mysterious East, out of which Moslem traders brought spices and silks and jewels, and into which a few missionaries and travellers occasionally ventured. People very much wanted to know more about these strange half-known men and countries, but all they had to go upon were stories told by sailors or written in books of travellers' tales. ^{Sailors' Yarns}

Two such books were very popular. The more reliable was by Marco Polo, a Venetian who had lived for many years at the court of Kubla Khan, who was the ruler of northern Asia from the Black Sea to the Pacific Ocean. For him Polo had travelled widely as a sort of ambassador and 'special correspondent', and had visited both India and China. (The reader would very much enjoy his book.) But even he told some very tall stories, for ^{He really had been there}

Do you
believe this?

example, he said that in India one way of getting diamonds was to throw pieces of raw flesh into the deep ravines in which the rivers of that country flow. The diamonds which the rivers wash up stick to the meat. White eagles pick up the meat and fly up with it. The diamond hunters then frighten off the eagles and collect the diamonds that are still sticking to the meat's under-side!

Even taller stories are to be found in the other popular travel book of the time by Sir John Mandeville (the reader would enjoy this also). Its author probably never went abroad at all. But he told of countries where the snails were so large that whole families used their shells as houses. 'And in another isle be folk that have great ears that hang down to their knees.'

II

Charts and
Maps

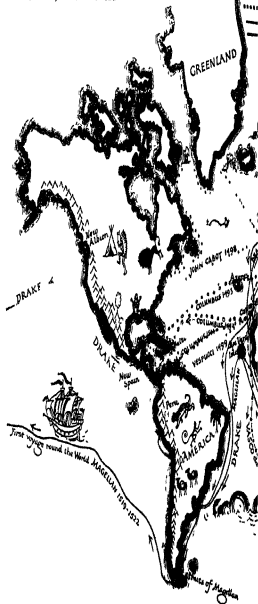
How big the
Earth is!

But between the years fourteen and fifteen hundred, Spanish, Portuguese and Italian explorers began to sail out beyond the known world and to bring back, not merely extraordinary tales and cargoes of strange merchandise, but corrected charts and maps. This new evidence seemed to show that the earth was much bigger than anyone had suspected.

Henry the
Navigator,
1394-1460

From Portugal ships could sail either south or west (see map facing this page). At first they always sailed south because they were looking, not for America (no one suspected its existence), but for a sea route to India. The great period of Portuguese exploration began in the time of Prince Henry of Portugal, one of the greatest men of his age. He spent his whole life organizing exploration, and he had a real scientific desire to discover more about the coast of Africa. He also hoped to be able to convert the people there to Christianity. Above all, he hoped that his ships might be able to get right round to India by sea, and so bring to Portugal the valuable spice trade that was still going overland or through the Red Sea and the Eastern Mediterranean. Henry gathered about him the

SOME VOYAGES & DISCOVERIES of the NEW WORLD



Bartholomew Diaz first round the Cape of Good Hope 1486
 Christopher Columbus first to find the West Indies & America 1492-3 1504
 Vasco da Gama round the Cape of Good Hope to India 1497-9
 John & Sebastian Cabot discovered Newfoundland 1497-8
 Amerigo Vespucci first to land (& name) South America 1499
 Ferdinand Magellan first round the world 1519-22
 Sir Francis Drake first up to New Albion (now San Francisco) and
 home round the world 1577-80



best map-makers and navigators of every country, turned his palace into a school for mariners and pilots, and built an observatory

Here was invented a new and better type of sailing ship, the caravel, and expedition after expedition set out from Portugal down the African coast. The sailors protested that there was no end to the long coast and that they would never be able to turn east to India. It was so hot that the paint and tar blistered and ran off the ships, there were terrible storms. Still Prince Henry urged them on. At last in 1441 his ships began to bring back valuable cargoes of slaves and gold-dust. The King of Portugal and the merchants saw that there were profits to be made, and sent out other expeditions themselves. But progress was slow. The ships and their crews were small, the early caravels were light half-decked ships of only fifty tons or so with seldom more than thirty men on board. Many sailors died in the African climate or were killed in revenge for the slaves who had been carried off. When Prince Henry died, in 1460, Portuguese ships had got no farther down the coast than Sierra Leone.

South down
the coast of
Africa

1441
Slaves,
Gold-dust
and Ivory

Then for a time exploration slackened off. But the work was taken up again by King John II of Portugal, and, in 1486, an expedition under Bartholomew Diaz at last did what Prince Henry had always believed could be done. His ships rounded the Cape of Good Hope and sailed into the Indian Ocean. In 1497 the work that Prince Henry dreamed of was finished, and Vasco da Gama sailed from Portugal to India. He had found the route for which sailors and merchants had been searching for nearly a hundred years. This was to be one of the most important trade routes in the world until the Suez Canal was opened in 1869. The Portuguese then took command of the Indian Ocean and built forts along the coast from East Africa to Malacca. A few ships even pushed on as far as China and Japan.

Vasco da
Gama, 1497

Indies (hence the modern name West Indies), and he even continued to believe this until the day of his death, although he made several other voyages there and lived until 1506. Other geographers, however, soon began to doubt, and other sailors to prove him wrong.

It was Amerigo Vespucci, another Italian, who sometimes worked for Spain and sometimes for Portugal, who actually reached the mainland, coasted along, but found no way through. It is after him that America is named. Cabral, a Portuguese, set a course farther south and discovered and explored the coast of Brazil. Other explorers steadily added to their knowledge. Finally, Ferdinand Magellan, a Portuguese in the service of Spain, set out in 1519 and sailed right round the world, at least one of his ships, the *Vittoria*, did, for Magellan himself was killed in the Philippines.

The Spaniards and Portuguese had so taken the lead in the work of exploration that in 1493 and 1494 the Pope officially divided the undiscovered parts of the world between the two nations. The Portuguese were to have everything to the east of an imaginary line drawn 370 leagues to the west of the Cape Verde Islands, the Spaniards were to have everything to the west. Merchant captains of other nations, however, wanted a share, English sailors tried to join in the African trade, and, in the attempt to find a westerly passage to China and India, several English ships reached the coast of North America. John Cabot and Sebastian, his son, two Genoese living at Bristol, led an English expedition which discovered Newfoundland, and in 1534 a Frenchman, Jacques Cartier, sailed up the St. Lawrence. But the great exploring days of English seamen were to come later.

All these discoveries were of tremendous importance to Europe. Ever since they were made the nations on the western coast of Europe have spent a considerable part of their time and energy in colonizing or conquering these new countries.

Amerigo
Vespucci,
1451-1512

Magellan,
1480-1521

1493
Pope says
Spanish and
Portuguese
can divide
the New
World

Cabots,
1425-1557

West Europe
becomes
important

Trade with
the East
comes a new
way

When the Portuguese gained command of the Indian Ocean, the result was just what they had hoped. The precious spice trade changed its direction. Before that, the spices had always gone overland, or by the Red Sea to the Eastern Mediterranean. From there they had been brought by Italian merchants who in turn distributed them through Europe. Now it was cheaper and easier to take spices to Lisbon. From there they went by sea to Antwerp, where merchants of all the countries of Europe met to buy them.

Cortez,
1485-1547

Spain became important in a different way. There were not so many spices to be brought back from America, but there was much gold and silver. The armies of Cortez and Pizarro, which followed the explorers, established colonies in Central and South America and from there treasure fleets regularly brought cargoes of silver and gold which were coined to pay immense armies in Europe. Unfortunately these soldiers and colonists stamped out the civilizations that they found in the New World, and either slaughtered or enslaved the natives. But the Spanish Empire became the greatest the world had seen since the days of Rome.

Besides these practical results the new knowledge of the great size of the world meant an unsettling of people's ideas.

New
discoveries
upset old
ideas

The Church—which claimed to know so much—had known nothing of these new countries and of the nations who lived in them. Even the Greek scientists and philosophers, even the great Aristotle himself, had known nothing of these things. Perhaps, people began to think, this present age and no other is really the greatest age that has yet been? Men began to look forward to a new and glorious future instead (as all through the Middle Ages) of back to an age that had been more civilized than their own.

IV

The sailors of Portugal and Spain led Europe in the discovery of new countries. In all the other fresh won-

ders of the century it was the citizens of Italy who led. They were followed by the inhabitants of the big towns of what are now Germany and Belgium.

During the Middle Ages, these towns and cities had become very rich from the trade which they carried on. They were now no longer ruled by the old type of feudal noble who lived on the rents paid by peasants and whose chief idea of making a name was to fight some other noble. Some of these cities, like Venice, were governed

'Where the
merchants
are the king'



THE TYPE OF PRINTING PRESS USED AT THIS TIME
Notice the man on the right setting type from the author's manuscript

by a council of merchants. Others, like Florence, were ruled by princes who were descended from merchants and who were still interested in trade. In these city states the arts flourished as never before. The rich citizens had plenty of money with which to pay scholars and artists, and were intelligent enough to enjoy the arts of civilization.

New tools were at hand, ready to be used. Printing, New tools
paper-making, the use of the compass, the arts of painting

in oil colours, or of making enamels, fine glass and fine steel, and the way to take accurate measurements, had all been discovered at least a generation earlier. At the same time, scholars in the universities had begun to study Greek and so rediscovered the arts and sciences of the ancient world. The works of Greek scientists, philosophers, poets and sculptors, had, in mediæval times, only been known to a few scholars, now they became the fashion.

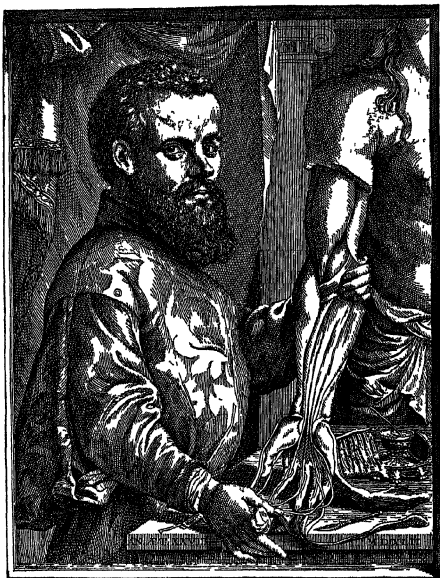
Even war led to invention. At this time, even war helped on the advance of knowledge. The new weapons, such as the cannon and the arquebus (an early hand gun), brought not only death and misery but all sorts of new inventions. Success in war was now no longer decided by brute strength or even by numbers, but often by such things as the skill of an engineer who quickly built a bridge in an unexpected place, who designed a new kind of fort that the cannon of the day could not batter down, or a new kind of cannon that could batter down any but the newest sort of fortification. Even the evil of the wounding of so many men in wars was at last used to help on medical knowledge—for example, by a brilliant army surgeon named Paré.

Great artists who carved and painted. It was the delight of the merchant princes, or the princes turned merchant, and of the Popes and great Churchmen of the time, to build splendid new palaces and churches, and to have them decorated by the best artists. Just as the learned men and scientists of a century earlier had studied not one, but half a dozen sciences, so the great artists of this time in Italy thought nothing of practising three or four different sorts of art. For instance, Michael Angelo was not only a great sculptor and a great painter, but he was also an architect, and an engineer who designed bridges and fortresses.

Michael
Angelo,
1475-1564

Some great
painters

Botticelli, Titian, Paul Veronese and Raphael were among the greatest painters that the world has ever seen, no more beautiful books have ever been printed than those designed by Aldus, or more exquisite gold work made than that hammered by Benvenuto Cellini.



VI SALIUS LECTURING ON ANATOMY IN 1542
He was then aged 28

Read the
Greeks first
but then see
for yourself

There were scientists, too. At first they thought it enough to learn what Aristotle had discovered about biology and had written about astronomy, or what Galen had said about the way the human body is made and about the curing of its diseases. But soon the younger men wanted first to repeat the experiments of the Greek scientists, and then to go on and make new ones of their own. In medicine and the study of the human body there was Vesalius of the University of Padua. A little

Copernicus,
1473-1543

later the great Polish astronomer, Copernicus, made observations of the planets which led him to a belief that changed men's ideas about the whole universe—his work taught astronomers that the earth was not, after all, the centre of everything, it was not 'the great world' round which the sun and stars revolved, but a tiny planet that, with other planets, turned in the vast emptiness of space round a fixed and distant sun. Do try to imagine how difficult it must have been at first to believe that the solid earth was rushing through space.



STATUETTE SAID TO BE BY
LEONARDO DA VINCI

Leonardo
da Vinci,
1482-1519

Notice that it is much more
life-like than the Gothic statues
on the opposite page

V

There was one man—Leonardo da Vinci—who seems almost to have summed up the whole age in himself. He had marvellous skill of hand, the power of painting and modelling, the taste, the inventiveness and the power of devising new experiments that were filling Italian cities with new inventions, new buildings and glorious



GOthic SAINTS

Unlike the Renaissance statues, these Gothic saints of an earlier date were not meant to be life-like, but notice their beautiful decorative effect

works of art His big oil pictures are among the finest ever painted, his little note-book sketches of a pea-pod or a butterfly are the most accurate and brilliant imaginable He was one of the best sculptors of his day and his inventions would make a long list Among them were a centrifugal pump, a dredge for canal-building, a universal joint, a submarine boat, a parachute, and a standardized, mass-production house

He was a strange man (he could, for instance, draw equally well with both hands, always wrote from right to left and generally in looking-glass writing) He often did not bother to let anyone know of the discoveries hidden away in his mysterious note-books

This is how, in Portugal, Spain, Italy, Germany and the Low Countries the old slow-moving, mediaeval world was gradually replaced by the quickly changing, novelty-loving new world of the Renaissance But England only lay on the fringe of all this, and in England, to whose story we must now go back, things changed more slowly

CHAPTER 26

BARONS AND CHURCH LOSE THEIR POWER

(1485 TO 1540)

WHEN Henry Tudor became King Henry VII of England Henry VII he found himself with a wonderful opportunity for break-¹⁴⁸⁵ ing the power of the barons and for making the crown stronger than it had ever been. The Wars of the Roses—a whole generation of fighting in which each side had lost in turn—had conveniently killed off most of the leading nobles until there were only about thirty peers left who were grown men. The other peerages had either become extinct or had been inherited by children. This made things much easier for Henry. Another thing that helped him to get the upper hand was that the new weapon of the day—the clumsy, muzzle-loading Cannon gave him a weapon against which the stone walls of the barons' castles were no sure protection. Henry VII, being an extremely shrewd and able man, grabbed the chances that this state of things offered to him.

Most people, except the great nobles and churchmen, were glad that he should do so, for they longed for peace. The country was in a bad state, for it was long since there had been a government strong enough to keep order. The central power can be dangerously strong, but for the last fifty years it had been too weak to do its job properly. The Venetian Ambassador wrote home The laws were not kept about the state of England.

There is no country in the world where there are so many thieves and robbers as in England, insomuch that few venture to go alone in the country excepting in the middle of the day, and fewer still in the towns at night, and, least of all, in London

Retainers Each important nobleman had collected around him a body of servants and smaller landowners who became his 'retainers', wore his badge or 'livery', and fought



GLOUCESTER CATHEDRAL

is the kind of building for which statues like those on p. 11 were designed

for him in his quarrels. In return the baron sent a body of these retainers to overawe any court in which one of them had a case, so that he might win whatever the rights of the business might be.

The Church The Church too looked after its own people and ever since the time of William the Conqueror had refused to allow any priest to be punished by the King's courts.

BARONS AND CHURCH LOSE THEIR POWER 15

From the time of Edward IV this same 'benefit of clergy' had been allowed to educated laymen as well. Actually anyone who could read and write could commit at least one serious crime without fear of any worse punishment than the mild penances imposed in the bishops' courts. Certain pieces of church property were also set aside as sanctuaries. In them no criminal could

Sanctuaries



ENGLISH TIMBERED HOUSE OF THE SUSSSEX TYPE

be arrested. Sir Thomas More (about whom there will be much to say) said of them

Thieves bring thither their stolen goods and live thereon. They devise new robberies, nightly steal out, they rob and kill, and come in again, as though these places gave them not only a safeguard for the harm they have done, but a license also to do more.

II

One of the first things that Henry VII did was to get a law passed forbidding the nobles to have retainers, and he was generally successful in making them obey.

Nobles
made to
keep the
laws

A famous story is told of a visit which he paid to the Earl of Oxford. As he left, he passed through two lines

of men all dressed in the Earl's colours Turning to the Earl, he said

'My lord, I have heard much of your hospitality, but I see it is greater than the speech These handsome gentlemen and yeomen which I see on both sides of me are your servants ?'

The Earl smiled and said

'It may please your Grace, they are most of them my retainers, that are come to do me service at such a time as this, and chiefly to see your Grace'

What
happened
when they
didn't

The King started a little, and said

'By my faith, my lord, I thank you for my good cheer, but I may not endure to have my laws broken in my sight My attorney must speak with you'

The Earl was fined £10,000

Lambert
Simnel and
Perkin
Warbeck,
1487-1497

Henry knew that killing was not always the best way of dealing with enemies At different times two men—Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck—claimed the throne on the pretence of being heirs of Edward IV Henry easily detected each of them He executed some of their followers, but the two 'pretenders' he punished by making them look fools Simnel was sent to work in the royal kitchen and made to serve wine to his former supporters when they visited the King Warbeck was put in the pillory and paraded through the London streets to be laughed at Other enemies he tried to win over by friendship He helped to make the Yorkists his friends by marrying Elizabeth of York.

Foreign
Countries

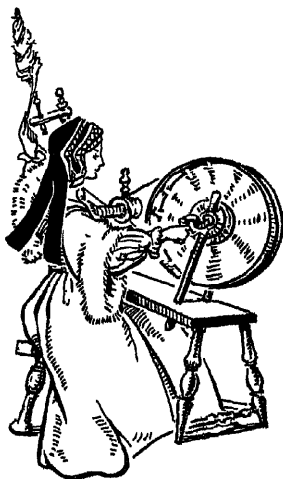
During the Wars of the Roses each side had tried to get support abroad, and Henry himself had gained the throne with foreign help He did not mean to lose it in the same way He made alliances with Spain, Scotland and the Netherlands and almost brought the war with France to an end He has the distinction of being the first English king to make alliances for peace and not for war

Above all, Henry realized that his strength depended on his being able to make himself rich and to keep the

middle classes—the country gentry and merchants—on his side. His greed for money was notorious. He was always imposing heavy fines and also made many of his richer subjects pay him what were supposed to be free gifts, called ‘benevolences’. But most people preferred a greedy king to civil war, and in other ways his way of governing suited the middle classes. Both he and his

Henry makes
himself rich

successors gave them a large share in the work, although not in the control, of government. Parliament was called fairly regularly, and more and more work was given to the magistrates. Great efforts were made to make the great nobles as well as ordinary people obey the laws, and a special court, the Court of Star Chamber, was set up. Here the most important members of the King’s Council sat, and no man was so great that he could hope to overawe it. It dealt with great men who had committed offences, with juries who allowed themselves to be bribed or bullied into giving false verdicts, and all cases of riot.



Spinning wheels were turned by hand. The Treadle was not yet invented.

The middle classes approved Henry’s laws about commerce and trade. He encouraged English shipbuilders and shipowners by beginning the building of a Royal Navy, and by ordering that wine might only be imported in English vessels. He pleased the merchants by making a favourable treaty for trade with the Netherlands and Spain, and limited the privileges of foreign merchants.

here He forced the Venetians to allow Englishmen to trade in Asia Minor and sent ships to explore westwards

In these ways Henry VII began to bring back peace and prosperity to England Never again were English nobles openly to flout the government, or rebel with any chance of success

He died rich and powerful and left to his son a kingdom that had got into the habit of obeying Only the great churchmen were in a position to hold out against the King's wishes

III

The Church	<p>The attack on the powers of the Church came under Henry VIII Already far back in the Middle Ages worldly people had (as readers of Volume II will remember) envied the Church its wealth, independence and privileges Pious people were not altogether satisfied either, not because the Church was rich, but because they thought its riches ought to be better used There had long been complaints against the greediness with which the clergy demanded heavy fees for christenings, marriages and burials Some earnest churchmen, such as Wyclif in England and Huss in Bohemia, had gone so far as to doubt the truth of some of the teachings of the Church They had said that the truths of Christianity were to be found in the Bible, not in what Church Councils had decided But in England, though Parliament had said (for instance in 1380) that monastery lands ought to be taken away and that the Church ought to pay more taxes, up to 1500 nothing had been done The kings had all preferred not to attack the Church There had, for one thing, always been the risk of driving the leading churchmen to join the rebellious barons But the fact that they were under the protection of the kings, rather than the fact that all pious men and women approved of them, began to be the chief protection of the great churchmen against two sets of enemies There were greedy nobles on one side, who wanted riches for them-</p>
Complaints had gone on for a long time	
But Kings had not wanted to quarrel with the Church	
Kings now the chief protectors of the Church	

selves, and reformers on the other who thought that the Church was spending its great wealth badly

The later reformers—Martin Luther in Germany and, later still, Calvin in Geneva—believed (just as Wyclif and his Lollards had) that during the course of history the Catholic Church had altered the doctrine of Christianity. The movement which they started was called the Reformation and quickly spread in northern Europe, where the Church was unpopular. Their ideas, for which Wyclif had prepared the way, soon began to reach England.

Luther,
1483-1546
Calvin,
1509-1564

The
Reformation

In all the disputes between Protestants (as the supporters of the new ideas were called) and Catholics one thing has to be remembered. Neither at this time, nor for a long time afterwards, did more than an occasional person believe that each man had a right to think what he pleased about religion. It was taken for granted that everyone ought to think alike. And now, when there was a choice between the Catholic Church and one or another of the different sorts of Protestantism, every king or queen tried to make his or her subjects conform to whichever kind of religion he or she believed or found convenient. So the attitude of whoever was on the throne at this time was important.

No one
wanted
people to
worship as
they like

IV

As a young man, Henry VIII, though vain, pleasure-loving and a spendthrift, was a devout Catholic. In fact, with the help of Sir Thomas More he wrote an attack on Luther, the German Protestant, for which the Pope rewarded him with the title of 'Fidel Defensor'—'Defender of the Faith' (Kings of England still bear this title, see the letters 'Fid Del' on a modern penny).

Henry VIII

But, about the middle of his reign, Henry VIII found himself wanting to do something which the Pope could not allow. Henry was tired of his wife, Catherine, a Spanish Princess who was considerably older than he was and whose children had all died except one daughter—

The King wants to divorce his wife

Mary Boleyn In 1527 he asked the Pope to declare his marriage null because Catherine had been the wife of his elder brother who had died. The Pope might possibly have agreed, but in this particular case there were two difficulties. One was that an earlier Pope had granted a special dispensation to allow Henry and Catherine to

What is the Pope to say?

Cardinal Wolsey, 1475-1530

Henry's request could not be granted except by admitting that the earlier Pope had been wrong. The other was that Catherine's nephew, the King of Spain, had at this particular time an army near Rome, and he would certainly resent it if a decision was given against his aunt. Long negotiations were carried on through Cardinal Wolsey, who besides being a Cardinal was Henry's Chancellor or chief minister. But, in spite of Wolsey's pleadings, the Pope refused to grant Henry's request.

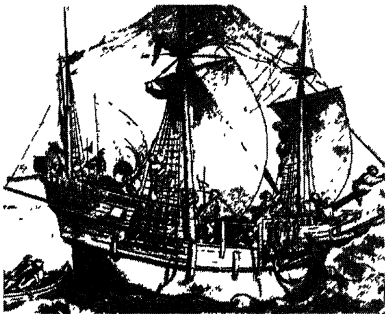
Henry attacks the Church

Henry was furious, and turning on his old friend Cardinal Wolsey, dismissed him from his office of Chancellor. The King went on to accuse the Church in England of illegally accepting Wolsey as papal legate. (A legate was a special representative of the Pope.) The charge was unjust, for the Church had not accepted Wolsey as legate until Henry had agreed to his appointment. But Henry was desperately in need of money and this seemed a splendid opportunity for getting some from the Church. By the advice of Thomas Cromwell, the Church was prosecuted in the Law Courts, condemned by Henry's judges, and had to pay an enormous fine.

But is still married to Catherine

But, in spite of the disgrace of Wolsey and the punishment of the Church, Henry was still married to Catherine. For a time he hoped that the Pope would change his mind, and in order to encourage him to do so he got an Act of Parliament passed which allowed the King to stop the payment of certain Church taxes to Rome if he wished. The Pope did not give way and in 1533 Henry, again on Thomas Cromwell's advice, decided to act. He got Parliament to pass a law forbidding appeals from the Church.

Courts of England to the Pope's Court in Rome. All the great churchmen were horrified, but most of them submitted, for they knew that the nation would not support them if they had an open struggle with the King, and after a solemn trial, Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury, declared that Henry's marriage to Catherine was null and void. In 1534 the new and very strange position



HOLBEIN'S SHIP

Drawing by Holbein (*c.* 1532) of a merchant ship of this time. Improvements in rigging and design had been made. Such ships carried the trade and discovery of the world.

of the Church in England was laid down in further Acts of Parliament. The authority of the Pope was entirely abolished here and Henry was declared to be 'Supreme Head of the Church.'

Further acts made it treason to speak a word against the King or Anne Boleyn, whom he had at once married, declared that Catherine's daughter was illegitimate, and ordered that Henry should be succeeded by Anne's

1534
Henry is
declared
Supreme
Head of the
Church

children How dreadful such things seemed to some of the best of Henry's subjects, and how ruthless the King was to them, will be told in the next chapter

V

If things had gone no further than this the great break might still have been avoided Kings and Popes had quarrelled before and had made peace afterwards But now the Church had many enemies

Parliament
gets a
chance it
had long
wanted

Parliament had for a long time been jealous of its privileges Now laws were passed against such abuses as the high fees charged for burials, and the practice whereby priests held several livings and lived away from their parishes

Money for
the King

But these reasonable reforms proved to be only a beginning Henry was always wanting more money. The Church was still immensely rich Henry had advisers who suggested that he could easily take more from it The chief of them was still Thomas Cromwell, and on his advice, Henry dissolved all the monasteries and took their land Such a thing, of course, could not be done quite without excuse, so Cromwell first sent round commissioners to inspect They brought back lurid accounts of the shocking lives led by the monks and nuns and the monasteries and convents were nominally suppressed for this reason But it would not be fair to believe these reports, Henry simply wanted the land.

Dissolution
of the Mon-
asteries,
1536-1539

When he had got it he did not keep it all himself, nor did the poor peasants get it Many fine estates he sold cheaply, or gave away to his ministers or to the country gentry whose support he wanted Rhynes were made up about the families that were thus newly made rich :

Wyndham, Popham, Horner, Thynne,
When the monks went out, they went in

There is another that in their younger days was well known to every reader of this book ; it begins

Little Jack Horner

Readers can finish it for themselves 'Plum' means a 'Christmas piece of rich monastery land. Once all these country gentry had put thumbs into the 'Christmas pie', the Reformation was bound to succeed in England. Naturally, families who had grown rich on wealth taken from the Church would find every reason for believing that the Church had been wicked. But the new religious ideas, real Protestantism, did not spread in England until the next reign.

And what, the reader may ask, was thought of all this at the time? Most people, clergy and laymen, seem to have taken it calmly enough. But such a great break could not be made without suffering, and in the next chapter the reader will find the story of one of those who preferred disgrace and finally death to breaking with the rest of Christendom.

Sir Thomas More, whom the Catholic Church has lately declared to have been a saint, not only took part in most of the chief events in Henry's reign, but was himself an exceedingly interesting person. It was through such people as More and his friends—and strangely enough through Henry VIII himself—that the influence of the Renaissance and of the many new ideas of the age, reached England.

CHAPTER 27

THE SAINT WHO WROTE *UTOPIA*— SIR THOMAS MORE (1478 TO 1535)

THOMAS MORE was a lawyer like his father, and like many of the men who rose to greatness at this time

The great Cardinal Wolsey, the most important man in England—Henry VIII's Lord Chancellor and close friend—was always on the look out for clever men, and he persuaded him to go as a special Ambassador to Antwerp

More begins
Utopia, 1516

While he was away from home More wrote (in Latin) what became a famous book. He called it *Utopia*. This means 'No-Place' and is the name of an imaginary island about which More pretended to have been told by a traveller

This man has sailed as a traveller, and was so desirous to see the world that he ran the same hazard as Amerigo Vespucci, and bore a share in three of his four voyages that are now published

Utopians
plan
beforehand

In the story, this traveller tells More about the Utopians. They live together in peace and plenty because they plan out beforehand what crops and new houses and clothes and shoes will be needed on the island during the next year, make enough of such things for everyone, and then put the goods in storehouses from which each family takes what it needs. There is no money, no one makes a profit, and no one is poor, for in this way there is enough for everybody though each person works only six hours a

day Six hours is enough, because there are no idle people, no one employs servants on unnecessary work, no time is spent in buying and selling, and they never fight among themselves To save waste and work, several families club together to cook their food, and eat together in a big hall They do not put people into prison, but if anyone has broken the law his punishment is simply to do a rougher share of the work for a time

A six-hour
working day

So More goes on to describe a land of peace and plenty in which learning and happiness flourish

His readers read with pleasure, thought it was all very nice, but continued to hang people for small thefts, or burn them for 'heresy', while war went on as usual 'Utopia', they said, is too good to be possible, and the word 'Utopian' to this day has that meaning

People read
with pleasure
but

II

As soon as More got back from Antwerp, Henry VIII was always summoning him to the Court But More preferred a quiet life, being extremely fond of his family His house was full of the sound of music and singing, also of innumerable pet animals and of distinguished friends One of these friends was the painter Holbein (see picture by him on page 26) Another was a celebrated Dutch scholar and author called Erasmus Here is a sample of the letters More wrote His daughter, Margaret, who was away from home, had asked for money

More at
home again

You ask me, my dear Margaret, for money with too much bashfulness and timidity I send you only what you have asked, but would have added more, only I am desirous to be asked and coaxed by my daughters, especially by you So the sooner you spend this money well, as you are wont to do, and the sooner you ask for more, the more you will be sure of pleasing your father

A letter to
Margaret

The King very much enjoyed More's company

The King, upon holidays, used to send for him and sometimes in matters of astronomy, geometry and theology, and sometimes of his worldly affairs, used to sit and converse with him

Conversing
and consider-
ing the
Planets

But there was something about Henry that More, though he was a loyal subject, did not like. One evening the King, unexpected and uninvited, came to dine with More in Chelsea. After dinner they walked in the garden (it is there to this day), the King with his arm round More's neck. William Roper, More's son-in-law, who had been watching from a window, afterwards congratulated More on being in such high favour. 'Son Roper,' said



HOLBEIN'S SKETCH OF SIR THOMAS MORE AND HIS FAMILY
More is in the middle, wearing a Chain of Office. Margaret is
in front on the right.

More, 'I may tell thee I have no cause to be proud thereof, for if my head would win him a castle in France it should not fail to go.'

More was soon to see how easily Henry would disgrace and ruin an old friend. When the King was young and went on a gay journey to The Field of the Cloth of Gold to meet foreign kings, Wolsey had been his boon companion, and for years had been his Chancellor and chief minister. But, as the reader has seen, when Wolsey

failed to get the Pope to do what the King wanted, Henry in his anger had no mercy and disgraced and ruined him. It was to More that Henry offered the Chancellorship. More had to accept, for it was really an order and not an offer, but he warned the King that he believed the divorce to be unlawful and could not change his opinion.

Fall of
Wolsey

More Chan-
cellor, 1529

A few months after More had taken office came the King's break with Rome. When this was complete, only three bishops—among them Bishop Fisher—refused to submit, or to agree that Henry was supreme head of the Church. But More, who was a layman, at once resigned his Chancellorship. He must have known how angry the King would be, but he cared more for a good conscience than for glory, or even for life and freedom.

Henry's
break with
Rome

For a few months he and his family were left in peace and 'still kept company and were merry together.' Then Henry's new wife, Anne Boleyn, was to be crowned Queen of England and More was invited to the coronation. Twenty pounds was sent so that he could buy new clothes for himself and his servants. But as he did not consider that Anne was a lawful Queen, he would not go. A few months later Parliament passed the Act, spoken of on page 21. All Henry's subjects had to declare that they believed that only the new baby, Elizabeth, could succeed to the Crown, and that Mary, Henry's daughter by Catherine of Aragon, was illegitimate. More vowed he intended no disobedience to the King, but that his conscience as a good Catholic forbade him to take the oath. He was at once imprisoned in the Tower.

More refuses
to go to
Anne's
Coronation

For more than a year his family lived in a state of terrible suspense, always fearing More might be tortured. His wife and his daughter Margaret often came to see him and begged him to take the oath—others had sworn, why not he? But he steadily and cheerfully refused.

He is sent to
the Tower,
1534

In April 1535 More and several bishops, priests and monks who had refused, were tried under yet another new law which made refusal high treason. More was

Sentenced to
Death condemned to death and taken back by water to his prison in the Tower His family were on Tower Bridge to say good-bye

Good-bye,
Margaret Margaret, when she saw her father, hastened towards him, pressing in among the midst of the throng and company of Guards that, with halberds and bills, went round about him, ran to him, embraced him and took him about the neck and kissed him He, well liking her dear daughterly affection, gave her his blessing and many godly words of comfort besides The beholding thereof was to many that were present so lamentable that it made them for very sorrow thereof to weep

More's death More remained 'merry and gentle' to the end The scaffold was rickety More, beckoning to the Lieutenant, said, 'I pray thee see me safe up, and for my coming down you may let me shift for myself'

He died, he said, as he had lived, 'The King's good and loyal servant, but God's first'

The story goes that Henry VIII, was at cards with Anne Boleyn when news was brought him that the execution was over He turned to her saying, 'You are the cause of this man's death!' Six months later she herself was executed

The rather sordid events of Henry VIII reign are thus reflected in the life and death of one of the best of men, a man who was at the same time learned, kind, brave, merry and pious He, the author of *Utopia*, who died for his devotion to the Catholic Church, and his still more learned friend Erasmus who loved him and hated the folly, and still more the cruelty, with which both sides too often behaved, were both in their different ways men of the new age

CHAPTER 28

THE TROUBLES THAT HENRY VIII LEFT TO HIS SUCCESSORS (ABOUT 1547 TO 1558)

HENRY VIII had been in many ways an exceedingly bad king. He had been cruel, greedy for money, warlike, and extravagant. He left behind him a number of difficult problems. One of these was the question of the succession to the throne. He had married six different wives, and when he got rid of one he usually got an Act of Parliament to declare that her children were illegitimate and so could not succeed him. Three of his children outlived him—Edward, Mary and Elizabeth, each the child of a different wife—and of these both Mary and Elizabeth had been declared illegitimate. Parliament had passed an Act allowing him to decide the succession himself, and in his will Henry had arranged for Edward to come first, for Mary to succeed Edward, if Edward should have no children, and for Elizabeth to succeed her if she should have no children. But, when the time came, both Mary and Elizabeth had to deal with rivals to the throne.

Who was to succeed?

Henry had broken with the Catholics by denying the authority of the Pope, by taking the lands of the monks, and by executing such men as More and Bishop Fisher. But he had not satisfied all the enemies of the old Church. Above all, nothing had been done for those who wanted to bring in the new doctrines of Protestantism. In Europe men like Martin Luther were teaching, not just that Popes had usurped their authority, but that many

Henry broke with the Pope but did not please the Protestants

Protestant Doctrine

other Catholic doctrines were wrong. They said that the bread and wine in the Mass did not really turn into the body and blood of Christ, that men ought to study and interpret the Bible themselves instead of being bound by the decisions of the Church, and that many Roman ceremonies were 'the worship of idols'. Henry had agreed that the authority of the Pope was false, because the Pope had refused to let him divorce Catherine. But he had completely disagreed with all the other new teachings, and had executed those who taught them as cruelly as he had executed More and the other Catholics. Many people in England do not seem to have cared much one way or the other, but the more earnest Protestants and the more devout Catholics each hoped that when Henry died they would triumph.

Henry only
agreed with
one

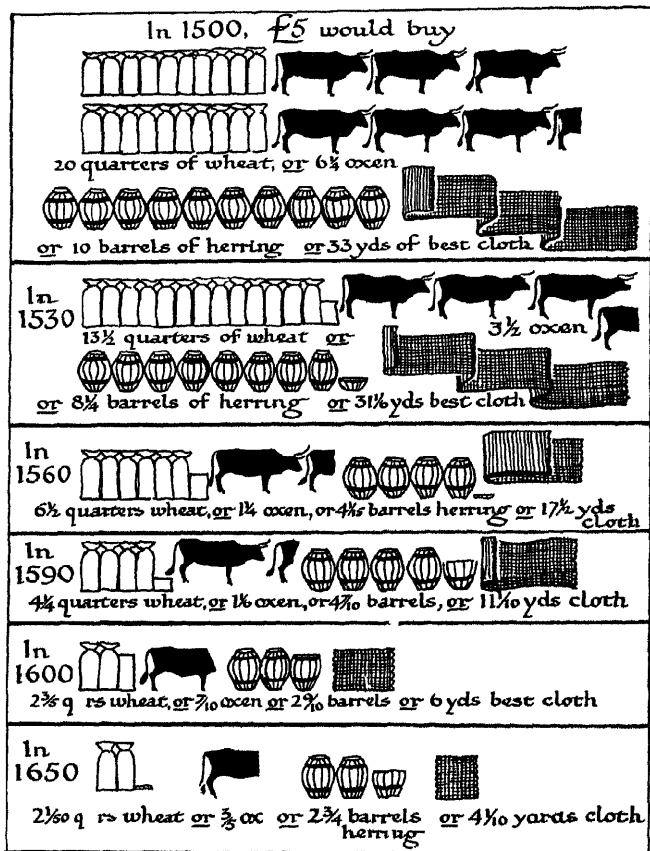
Foreign Affairs In foreign affairs Henry had left England surrounded by enemies. There was open war with Scotland, which he had tried to conquer. The French were angry because he had captured Boulogne, while Charles V, who was the ruler both of Spain and Germany, had never forgiven the treatment of his aunt, Catherine. Naturally the Pope was still a bitter enemy.

Money At home the government was nearly bankrupt. Henry had spent all the money which his father had saved, all the taxes which Parliament had granted him, and the money from the sale of the monastery lands, and had left many debts unpaid.

II

The money side of this state of affairs, however, was not all Henry's fault. He had been extravagant, but all through his reign prices had been rising and he had had to pay more for everything that he wanted, yet his income had not grown at the same rate. Prices rose chiefly because more and more silver was coming into circulation both from the old mines of Germany and from the new ones of Mexico and Peru. When there was more of it silver became less valuable, for the more

Why were
prices rising?



This Chart shows you how much more you could buy for £5 in 1500 than in 1650 This rise in prices was most important

that people have of anything the less they are willing to give, or do, to get a little more. So, as silver shillings became more plentiful, people began to sell less and less food, drink or clothes for a shilling. In other words, money had become plentiful and prices had risen, so the King and everybody else had to pay more for everything that they bought. (See the chart on page 31.)

How he
increased the
rise in prices

Henry, of course, could not be blamed because there was more silver in the world. But he had foolishly made the rise in prices much worse. For in order to pay his debts he had several times 'debased the coinage'.

Coins
'blushed for
shame'

That is to say, in order to make the silver in the mint go farther he had issued new coins with less silver in each. (The copper in them made them so red that they were said to be blushing for shame.) Naturally, people refused to take these at the same value as the old coins. Prices rose still more and everybody, including in the long run the King himself, found their difficulties increased.

High prices
brought
distress

So Henry left his children a load of trouble. But as well he left them a great social problem for which he was only in part to blame. During his reign there was distress and discontent among the great mass of people. The rise in prices was a serious blow to most of those who worked for someone else, for, as nearly always happens when prices go up, wages did not rise anything like so quickly. At the same time small farmers began also to suffer at the hands of their landlords.

Higher rents

Since landlords, like everyone else, had to pay more for what they bought, they tried to squeeze more money out of their tenants. Rents were raised.

A man that had land of ten pound by year
Surveyed the same, and let it out dear
So that ten pound made well a score
More pounds by the year than he did before

Some landlords, particularly the merchants and speculators who bought up the old monastery lands, raised rents by more than the 200 per cent mentioned in the

rhyme Then, too, it was found that big farms paid ^{Big farms} better than small ones, so small tenants found themselves turned out with no future except to work or to beg 'The rich worldlings,' said a writer of the period, 'join farm to farm and heave other men out of their livings' Enclosed land (that is, land divided and fenced into separate private fields) paid better than land that lay in ^{Enclosures} strips in the common fields or in common pasture So a great deal of land was enclosed, and the villagers found themselves left with fewer places in which they could feed their beasts and gather firewood What was perhaps, from the point of view of the poor countryman, worst of all, the demand for wool for the cloth trade made sheep farming more profitable than corn-growing When the new big enclosed farms were used as sheep runs, the families who had worked the small farms did ^{Sheep} not even get employment as labourers, for a shepherd and his dog could care for many sheep

Your sheep [wrote Sir Thomas More] that were wont to be so meek and tame and so small eaters now, as I hear say, be become so great devourers and so wild, that they eat up and swallow down the very men themselves They consume, destroy and devour whole fields, houses and cities

These changes led to better agriculture, but as a ^{'Fat beasts and poor lean people'} proverb of the time said, 'Enclosures make fat beasts and lean poor people' The land no longer fed the people so well, though it made money. The peasants who were turned out to make room for sheep suffered terribly, and something had to be done about it

III

When Edward, Henry VIII's only son, came to the ¹⁵⁴⁷ throne, he was only nine years old At first the man who really governed England was his uncle the Duke of Somerset, who was called 'Lord Protector' Somerset is one of the few great men of that time in whose efforts ^{A reasonable} the modern reader can take a real interest, for he tried to ^{man}

solve the problem of governing England in what seems now a humane and reasonable way

The
Protestants

In religion he was a Protestant and he did what the Protestants wanted to the extent of abolishing some ceremonies, of publishing an English prayer book for official use, and of taking away the lands of the chantries (that is, chapels in which masses were said for the souls of the dead) But he did not torture and execute either those who still believed the old ideas or those who preached others more advanced Everybody was expected to conform to the new system in the Church, but that system was left rather vague and the heresy and treason laws were not really enforced There was, that is to say, a good deal of religious toleration, a thing which we take for granted in England now, but in which few people then believed

Heresy Laws
not enforced

Edward to
marry the
young Queen
of Scots ?

Somerset wanted peace abroad and he worked hard to get it To the Scots he suggested that Edward should marry the young Mary Queen of Scots, and so unite the two countries Unfortunately the Scottish government did not at once agree, and Somerset spoiled any chance of persuading them by marching an English army into Scotland Little Queen Mary was at once sent over to France and betrothed to the heir to the French Crown

The Com-
monwealth
Party

At home, he tried hard to put a stop to tyranny and misgovernment He repealed the most unpopular of Henry's laws He tried to economize, to restore the coinage, and to stop the enclosure of common land and the growth of sheep-farming Thus he encouraged the famous 'commonwealth party'; who taught that a rich man had duties as well as rights and ought not to use his property in such a way as to injure others In order to set an example, Somerset asked Parliament to pass an Act to give his own tenants special protection against himself He appointed a commission to discover who had broken laws that already existed against the conversion of cornland into pasture and asked Parliament to pass more laws of the same kind

He revives
old laws
against turn-
ing cornland
into pasture

But he soon found, as honest men often do, that the attempt to rule well raised many obstacles and many enemies. His religious tolerance annoyed those who wanted to persecute either the Catholics or the Protestants. Both the Scots and the French rejected his plans for peace and made him fight. Above all, the great landlords were enraged by the teachings of his supporters and his own efforts to check their shady profit-making. Somerset's enemies

Sir Thomas More had said of the government of England in his day, that it was really 'a conspiracy of the richer sort, who, on pretence of managing the public, do only pursue their private ends'. The 'richer sort' now used all their power to stop the attempts at reform. When juries were appointed to see that the smaller farmers were really given the protection of the old laws, the big landlords either packed them with their friends or threatened them into giving the verdicts they wanted. Trickery was used, in some places a single furrow was drawn across a pasture to make it into 'a ploughed field'. Parliament acted for the landlords against the peasants, all the important reforming bills were rejected so that the process of enclosing farms and turning out smallholders went steadily on. Tricks

By 1549 the poor country people were desperate. The peasants rebel

We must needs fight it out [they said], or else be brought to the like slavery that the French men are in. These idle bellies (the landlords) will devour our youth, and when we shall be old then shall we be driven to beg and crave of them that will not give us so much as crusts. Better for us to die like men than after so great misery in youth to die more miserably in old age!

There were risings all over the South and West of England, and one in Norfolk under the leadership of a tanner, William Kett. The hated fences were pulled down and the sheep driven off. This rising of the peasantry meant the end of Somerset's government. Power was taken out of his hands and the Earl of Warwick set up in his stead. The rich blamed him for encouraging the discontented poor. Kett the Tanner

Somerset and for hesitating to crush them Somerset was disgraced and sent to prison

As soon as he was out of the way his work was undone and the Protestants did what they liked, more of its wealth was taken from the Church, more ceremonies were abolished, and government support was given to the landlords and the rich

IV

In 1553 the triumph of the Protestant gentry was cut short by the death of the young King, Edward. According to Henry VIII's will, his half-sister Mary was next in the succession. She was a devout Catholic and hated much that was being done. The Duke of Northumberland—the most important man in the country since Somerset's fall—had thought that Edward, who had always been delicate, might die before he was old enough to marry. Therefore he had succeeded in persuading him to leave the crown by will to Lady Jane Grey, a distant relation of the King and Northumberland's own daughter-in-law. But when Edward died, Northumberland proved too unpopular to raise the army without which Lady Jane could never be placed on the throne. Times had changed and Edward could not will the Kingdom away as William the Conqueror had done, as if it had been a house and garden. By the end of the year Northumberland and his chief supporters had been executed, a little later Lady Jane Grey and her husband were beheaded too. Mary was definitely Queen of England.

In religion this meant a great change, though the peasants neither gained nor lost by it. Mary married the Catholic King of Spain and worked as hard as she could to re-establish the Catholic Church in England. The old services and ceremonies were brought back, the authority of the Pope was accepted once more, and Archbishop Cranmer of Canterbury and other leading Protestants were either burned, driven into exile, or forced to change their beliefs.

But Mary and the Catholic party found that they could not really bring back the old system. Some Protestants were willing to suffer death rather than give up their faith. Archbishop Cranmer and Bishops Ridley and Latimer were among those who were burnt at the stake, and these flames 'lit a candle in England' that Mary was powerless to put out. Men like Cranmer and the Protestants of the reign of Edward VI had been accused of deserting the Church of Rome for selfish reasons. Now these Protestant martyrs proved that they felt their new beliefs to be worth dying for.

Latimer and Ridley

Selfish Protestants

Most people gave way to Mary as they or their fathers had given way to her father, Henry VIII. But many of them did it half-heartedly and with bad grace. The 'little Jack Horners' who had grown rich when the monastery lands were shared out and who were now among the most important people in the country and in Parliament, definitely refused to give back their new wealth. Yet it was impossible to be a good Catholic and keep property that had been taken from the Church.

Selfish Protestants

To add to Mary's troubles, she never had any children. When she died in 1558 she was a bitter and disappointed woman, who knew that she had failed to make England really Catholic again, and that her Protestant half-sister, Elizabeth, would succeed her and undo her work.

Mary dies disappointed

CHAPTER 29
IN THE REIGN OF QUEEN ELIZABETH
(1558 TO 1588)

WHEN the young princess Elizabeth came from the retirement (that was nearly imprisonment) in which her sister had kept her, to be proclaimed Queen of England, it was clear that she was going to have a very difficult time

Religion and the Succession The most urgent problem was that of Religion, for it was a question which, among other things, involved her right to be Queen. As Henry's first wife had still been alive when Elizabeth was born, as the Pope had refused and the Protestant bishops had allowed a divorce, whether you considered Elizabeth the rightful Queen or not, depended upon whether you were a Protestant or a Catholic. Naturally Elizabeth herself had been brought up as a Protestant. But if, as good Catholics held, she was illegitimate, then the next heir to the throne was Mary Queen of Scots—granddaughter of Henry VIII's sister Margaret.

Elizabeth has to depend on the Protestants Elizabeth and her supporters depended then on Protestant support, and they had to find some settlement of the Church question which would satisfy as many people as possible. Elizabeth was young, but she was well educated, had had a hard life, and had learned by experience, and in solving this first problem she was highly successful. So lasting was the settlement that she made, that the Church of England to-day 'As by Law Established' is what she and her advisers made it, and the Book of Common Prayer that was then issued is still in use in

every church in the country Exactly what a good member of the Church of England must believe was laid down in Thirty-Nine Articles, and these Articles must still be signed by every clergyman But under Elizabeth not only clergymen, but everyone in every parish was expected to agree to them Everyone by law had to go to church, and an Act of Uniformity was passed which made the services laid down in the Book of Common Prayer the only legal form of worship



DESIGNING A SHIP

Notice the padded trunk hose and soft leather boots worn by the man with the divider

All the same, some Catholic families—especially in the north—kept to the old faith Catholic priests, at the risk of their lives, went about in disguise preaching and giving the sacraments In some old houses ‘Priests’^{Priests’} Holes’^{Holes} can still be seen, dark tiny rooms into which the only way is cunningly hidden behind a picture or a piece of panelling Some Catholics hoped for ‘better times’ and there were plots and whispers about what would happen if the Queen died ‘a natural—or any other—death’.

There were also some Protestants who were discon-

tented, who thought that Elizabeth had not gone far enough in the way of reform and wanted a further 'Purification' of Church services—(they were called from this 'Puritans' Puritans) Now Elizabeth, who to keep her throne had to satisfy the majority of her Protestant subjects, did not like the Puritans in England. But she profited when their ideas became powerful in Scotland. Mary Queen of Scots was a Catholic, but a band of enthusiastic Protestants under John Knox persuaded the Scottish Parliament to overthrow Roman Catholicism in Scotland, thus bringing about a quarrel between Queen and government. This made Elizabeth feel more secure, for it was now impossible for Mary to get a Scottish army to follow her in any attempt to turn a Protestant queen off the English throne.

Scotland
becomes
Protestant

Mary of
Scotland was
also Mary of
France

This was not the only outside factor that helped Elizabeth against her rival. Mary had been married to the King of France and lived at the French Court. France and England, when Elizabeth came to the throne, were on bad terms, although the last of the English possessions in France, the town of Calais, had been lost in the previous reign. While Mary of Scotland was also Queen of France there was always the chance that a French army might try to make her Queen of England too. But in 1561 Mary's husband died and she had to go back to her own kingdom of Scotland.

Mary's third
marriage

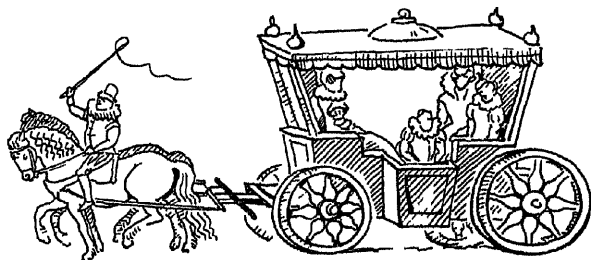
Civil War in
Scotland

Finally, Mary's own actions helped Elizabeth. Mary was a beautiful and fascinating woman, but when she got back to Scotland she married a most unpleasant husband whom she soon hated. He was murdered, and she quite soon married the man who had almost certainly been responsible for his death. The scandal of this third marriage was followed by a civil war, and the Queen of Scots (leaving her young son behind her) was forced over the border into England and gave herself up as a prisoner to Elizabeth. In Scotland her son James was proclaimed king.

For years she was kept first in one prison and then

another, Elizabeth dreading all the time the plots for a Catholic rising in England, or a Catholic invasion from abroad, of which her spies constantly brought her news. How dangerous these were the reader can judge when he remembers that Elizabeth's sister, the other Mary, had actually been the wife of the devout Catholic King of Spain, and reads (further on) of what other reason the Spanish government had to hate the English.

The beautiful romantic Queen of Scots, with whom so many people sympathized, was dangerous even in prison, but for a long time Elizabeth hesitated. At last,



COACH IN WHICH ELIZABETH'S MAIDS OF HONOUR TRAVELLED

It had no springs, and on very bad roads it might be drawn by as many as six or eight horses.

however, in 1587, she had Mary tried on a charge of encouraging one of these plots. Mary was found guilty, as Elizabeth meant her to be, and was beheaded. Her son James VI of Scotland had been brought up as a Protestant, so, with the death of poor Mary, Elizabeth had escaped one of her worst dangers. It was to no one's interest to put the Protestant James on the English throne in her place.

II

The reader will remember that for the last fifty years prices had been rising, that the coinage had been

tampered with, and that the government was in debt. Most of the people of England still depended on farming for a living, but enclosures, and the use of farm land as sheep-runs, had thrown agriculture out of gear, rents were high and there was a great deal of misery and unemployment.

Soon after Elizabeth began her reign things began to get a little better. Wool was now so plentiful that the price began to fall, and at the same time the price of

corn rose because less was being grown. Therefore it began to pay the landlords to grow more of it again. This meant that, though bread was dear, there was at least more employment. Elizabeth and her great minister, William Cecil, were active in helping the recovery. One of the things they did was to improve the coinage. The Queen could not afford to restore it to its old weight, but she had it all reminted and made uniform in weight



A COUNTRYMAN AND WOMAN
OF THE TIME OF ELIZABETH

Reminting
all the money

The woman wears her felt hat
over her linen headcloth

and fineness. This to some degree checked the rise in prices and made trading easier.

Elizabeth and her ministers also made provision for the relief of the large numbers of tenants who had been turned out of smallholdings, of unemployed soldiers and labourers, and of other people who were struggling along on the charity of their friends or roaming about the country begging and stealing for a living. The Poor Law which Elizabeth set up looks very harsh and crude to us to-day. Every parish, for example, was expected to support its own poor, tramps who wandered about from

Elizabethan
Poor Law

parish to parish were to be flogged, even a sick person was often chased from village to village because no parish wanted to support him. But in spite of its shortcomings this Poor Law did two important things. It recognized the fact that a man or woman might be without work or money for no fault of their own, in which case they ought not to be treated as rogues, and it admitted that the State had a duty toward them, and that they ought not to be obliged to depend on private charity.

Not Rogues
and
Vagabonds

III

The reader will remember that in the first chapter in this volume there is an account of the discovery of many new countries and of new routes to countries (such as India) with which Europe had long traded.

The New
Worlds

In the reign of Elizabeth English seamen began to take a hand in trading, exploring and colonizing. The names of some of the English explorers can be read on any map of the world—for example Hudson Bay, the Hudson River, Davies Strait and Frobisher Bay. Frobisher and Hudson when they sailed north were—just as Columbus had been—‘persuaded of a new and nearer passage to China.’ They argued in this way: ‘There is a South-West Passage round the tip of South America—the ‘South-West end of the world’—and Magellan went through it. It is at least likely that there is also a North-West Passage (America was unmapped and they believed that it was shaped much the same at both ends). Since the Spaniards claim the South-West Passage and since the northern one is nearer for us, let us be the first to discover the northern route. They set out.

To China?

Knowing this to be the only thing of the world that was yet left undone whereby a noble mind might be made famous and fortunate

No one but the Laps and Esquimaux had ever sailed the polar seas or experienced the terrible darkness of

the six months polar night, so Frobisher, the first arctic explorer, did not know that, though there really is a North-West Passage, it is too ice-blocked and storm-racked for the small ships he had—indeed for any sailing ship

The Colony
of Virginia

Spain had long had colonies abroad, and now an attempt was made to settle English people in the new world, the first settlement being made in Virginia (now one of the south-eastern states of the United States of America) The first colonists suffered terribly and it was a long time before even a village with a few fields of maize and tobacco were established (There is more about how they fared in Chapter 32) But there were other enterprises more tempting than exploring and colonizing

'Venturers'

Sir John Hawkins, for instance, sailed south instead of north and did a dangerous and profitable trade in gold and negro slaves Wonderful tales were told of the riches that were to be found in South America, diamonds, rubies, gold and silver from newly discovered mines, musk and ambergris and spice that were worth their weight in gold In the west of England and in London people with money to spare would 'venture' it abroad Elizabeth herself, her ministers and courtiers, the merchants of the cities of London, Bristol and Plymouth, would take shares in ships and cargoes The risks were great, for sometimes the ships would be sunk and the cargo lost Sometimes they would come back with a lading of enormous value Then there would be great rejoicings The officers and crew got so much, those who had a share in the cargo so much, the owners of the ship so much, and the Queen so much in taxes

The Spanish
Main

But there was one difficulty The rich lands of the 'Spanish Main' and the produce of their mines were all claimed by the King of Spain He considered that the English had no right to trade in these places because the Pope, nearly a hundred years earlier, had reserved these countries to the Spanish and Portuguese

The Spaniards had special reasons for hating the English more, for instance, than the French merchants who were also trying to trade. King Philip II was still King of Spain. He was a very pious Catholic and, while his wife, Mary, had been Queen of England, he had encouraged all her activities in putting down Protestantism. It was bitter to him to see it now so successfully re-established under Elizabeth. Philip ruled over not only Spain, but over Portugal and what is now Holland. In the last most of the inhabitants were Protestant.

Hatred
between
England and
Spain

The Dutch rebelled when the Inquisition was set up in Holland (the Inquisition was a very severe Church-Court by means of which pious Catholics were trying to define and then stamp out heresy. Many Protestants who would not give up their faith were burnt at the stake by its order). Elizabeth helped the Hollanders with men and money and they were then able to stand out against the Spaniards.

What made the hatred between England and Spain even hotter was that most of the English sea captains and explorers did not stick to trade. Even when Spain and England were not officially at war, English commanders were apt, whenever they got the chance, to rob the big, badly armed Spanish treasure ships and pillage Spanish towns in South America. Sir Francis Drake, the first Englishman to sail his ship round the world, plied this doubtful trade. There is an account of this 'Francisco Drac', as they called him, by a Spanish captain whose ship he surprised and captured one moonlight night.

'Francisco
Drac'

He is a nephew of John Hawkins [wrote his Spanish prisoner] and the same who about five years ago took the port of Nombre de Dios. He is a man about 35 years of age, low of stature, with a fair beard, and is one of the greatest mariners that sails the seas both as a navigator and as a commander. His vessel is a galleon of about 400 tons and a perfect sailor. His crew he treats with affection and they treat him with respect. He is served on silver dishes with gold borders and gilded garlands.

Gold plate

The Music of
Viols

in which are perfumed waters. He says that many of these things had been given him by the Queen. He dines and sups to the music of viols, he carries painters who paint for him pictures of the coast in its exact colours. This I was most grieved to see, for each thing is so naturally depicted that no one who guides himself according to these paintings can possibly go astray. I believe that half his fleet belongs to the Queen.

Sir Walter Raleigh was another of those who was not above attacking Spanish ships even when Spain and England were not officially at war.

The treasures that were to be had were dazzling. The two countries were, as it happened, officially at war when the 'Madre de Dios' was captured. She was a ship of 1,600 tons burden which had seven decks and carried 800 men, and was captured by three English ships whose commanders disputed bitterly as to who had the best claim to her. She was crammed with treasure of all sorts.

Pearl, Ebony
and Musk

There were pearls and spices, there was ambergris and musk, tapestries, silks, satins, ebony and two great crosses and a jewel of diamonds, meant as presents to the King of Spain.

Dartmouth
was like a fair

When a prize crew got her into Dartmouth the news had already got round. Jewellers came down from London hearing that there were forks and spoons made of crystal set with rubies. Dartmouth and Plymouth looked as if a fair was going on. Robert Cecil, son of the Queen's chief minister, and Sir Walter Raleigh were sent hurrying from London to see that nothing was plundered from 'Her Majesty's portion' before the official sharing out. They tried to stop people from taking the things away secretly before they had been valued. No trunk or bundle was allowed to be taken out of Plymouth or Dartmouth without being searched for Spanish treasure. On their way down from London, Cecil and Raleigh stripped and searched everyone they met who was coming the other way. Cecil said that he could almost smell the thieves, 'there

Spanish
treasure in
your trunk?

had been such spoils of musk and ambergris among them'

IV

Now though sacking Spanish towns and capturing Spanish treasure ships was very tempting, a great many lives were lost at the game and less real profit was made than if the English had stuck to more or less honest trade, and kept the peace. For naturally (though Elizabeth kept on trying from time to time to prove that she knew nothing of this wicked 'Francisco Drac' and the others) everyone was sure that she both knew and profited Piracy on that scale was bound to lead to war. The Spaniards determined to fit out a great fleet and a yet greater army and to attack England, the home, in their opinion, of heretics and pirates.

A huge fleet of warships and transports, The Great Armada, brought over a Spanish army, this army was to join another which the Prince of Parma had gathered in Holland. England was not well prepared. But the danger roused the spirit of the nation.

Queen Elizabeth's own speech, when she went to review troops that had been assembled at Tilbury, gives a vivid impression of the way in which the danger was faced. The reader will probably notice two things about the speech: the reference to plots in the first sentences, and the splendid way in which the speech is written. The picture on page 48 will give the reader an idea of how Elizabeth looked that day. She was dressed in all her jewels and, as the picture shows, was mounted on a great white horse. These are her words.

My loving people—

We have been persuaded by some that are careful of our safety to take heed how we commit ourselves to armed multitudes, for fear of treachery. But I assure you I do not desire to live to distrust my faithful and loving people. Let tyrants fear! I have always so behaved myself that, under God, I have placed my chiefest strength and safeguard in the loyal

hearts and goodwill of my subjects, I am come amongst you at this time, not for my recreation and disport, but being resolved, in the midst and heat of the battle, to live and die amongst you all, to lay down for my God, and for my kingdom, and for my people, my honour and my blood, even in the dust I know I have but the body of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too, and think foul scorn that Parma or Spain or any prince of Europe should dare to invade the borders of my realm, to which, rather than any dishonour shall grow by me, I myself will take up arms, I myself will be your general, judge and rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field



QUEEN ELIZABETH RIDES IN STATE

She wears a huge ruff called a 'Cartwheel' and carries the Orb and Sceptre

The
Spaniards
appear,
June 1588

The Spanish fleet of 130 ships with 8,000 seamen and 19,000 soldiers appeared off the Cornish coast on July 19th and sailed on up the Channel. When they had passed, the English fleet of smaller ships sailed out of Plymouth and hung on their rear. On the 21st-23rd and 25th there was fighting. On the 27th the Armada anchored off Calais ready to take Parma's army aboard. The English sent fire ships among them. The Spaniards, alarmed, cut their own ships' cables and, with a south-west wind, drove past the mouth of the Thames.

Not a single soldier had been landed and now the Spaniards turned north, hoping for nothing better than perhaps to be able to get back to their own country round the north of Scotland. Only fifty-three of the great ships ever got back to Spain.

CHAPTER 30

PROSPERITY AND THE GOLDEN AGE OF POETRY

(1588 TO ABOUT 1620)

ELIZABETH was no longer a young woman when the
Safe at last Armada was so dramatically beaten. But now—though
there were still quarrels at the Court, some discontent in
the country, and still awkward things to be said or heard
when it came to interviewing a foreign ambassador—at
last Elizabeth and her government not only felt, but
were, safe

William Harrison, a clergyman who (between 1577
'A descrip- and 1587) wrote a delightful "Description of England,"
tion of speaks of 'the great increase of people in these days'
England', Old men, he says, notice that things are 'marvellously
altered' in their remembrance, there is a great increase
in the number of chimneys, for instance, to be seen in
each village, and a 'great amendment of lodging'

Our fathers (yea, and we ourselves also) have lain full oft
upon Straw Pallets on rough mats with a good round log
under their heads instead of a bolster or pillow. Servants, if
they had any sheet above them it was well, for seldom had they
any under their bodies to keep them from the pricking straws
that ran oft through the canvas of the pallet, and razed their
hardened hides

Sheets and even feather beds were now common.
New farm-houses with six or seven rooms were built

In number of dishes and changes of meat, the nobility of
England do exceed the craftsmen and husbandmen also

are sufficiently liberal and very friendly at their tables and when they meet are merry without malice that it would do a man good to be in company among them

On the farm, root crops were still unknown, but the breed of pigs and sheep improved and wolves had at last been got rid of. The plough oxen were much larger than they had been in the Middle Ages, and the 'Great Horses' which earlier had only been used for war, began to do farm work or be used as pack-horses. Ducks, geese, hens and pigeons were kept, the first turkeys were brought from Mexico, but many people preferred to stick to eating swan and peacock.

All kinds of new plants were now grown in English gardens.

If you look into our gardens how wonderfully is their beauty increased not only with flowers but with rare and medicinal herbs so that in comparison with the present the ancient gardens were but dunghills.

One of these new plants was the potato from America. Tobacco was also brought over and used not only to smoke but also, like many other foreign plants, as a medicine.

It is impossible to read Harrison's book, or any of the accounts written at the time of how the ordinary man lived, without seeing that there had been a real increase in comfort and prosperity.

II

It was when this prosperous time came that the arts flourished in England as they had done earlier in Italy.

Painting, sculpture and architecture were never brought to such perfection here as they had been abroad. But in the last part of Elizabeth's reign and the early part of that of James I, England gave to the world the most splendid poetry and the most exciting and amusing plays that had ever yet been written. The name of one Englishman of that time is known all over the world to-day, his plays

The most famous of all Englishmen

are acted wherever there is a theatre, and have been translated into every written language William Shakespeare is, in fact, probably the most famous Englishman who ever lived

The 'Shakespeare scene of our age,' 1564-1616

Some people think of Shakespeare, who was an actor as well as a poet, as if he had been the only man of his time who wrote fine plays and poems This was not so indeed, it is almost impossible that it should have been so In the arts and sciences the reader will nearly always find that great men grow in clumps It seems as if they were given their chance to be great by the general way of living and by the spirit of the times In England an age of science was to come, but this was above all, a time of great writers, and a time when the English language was splendidly used Shakespeare was certainly the greatest poet and dramatist of his time, in many ways the greatest who ever lived, but even had he never lived, it would have been a great age

Sir Walter Raleigh, 1522-1618

One thing is to be noticed about all the people who were writing in England then they were almost all active and adventurous in other ways The reader has seen from her speech at Tilbury, that Elizabeth herself wrote in a far more moving and exciting way than great personages write now Sir Walter Raleigh, one of her most splendid courtiers, was typical of the age He was not only a tremendous dandy but also a sea captain, fought (most cruelly) on land in Ireland, explored the Orinoco and founded the colony of New Guinea, was one of the most daring of the 'venturers', and also a distinguished author He wrote a history of the world, was an excellent poet, loved music, and delighted in making chemical experiments Sir Philip Sidney, another famous courtier and soldier, also wrote most beautiful songs (Any reader who enjoys poetry should look at the first part of 'The Golden Treasury' where many of Sidney's short poems are printed besides those of other Elizabethan song-writers) Francis Bacon, again, was equally famous in his own day as a tricky politician, as an able minister,

Sir Philip Sidney, 1554-1586

Francis Bacon, 1561-1626

and as a learned writer on philosophy and the right way to set about scientific research

It is quite to be expected that in such an active age even men whose chief work was writing should have meant their best poetry and stories to be spoken and acted and sung on the stage. There were regular theatres now (see the picture on page 54) and regular travelling companies of actors. Dozens of exciting plays were written. A long list would only bore the reader, so let it be enough to say a word or two of two typical plays—a tragedy and a comedy.

One of many famous writers of tragedy was Christopher Marlowe. In one of his plays he tells how Dr Faustus, a learned man, becomes impatient of the slow carefulness of scientific experiment and turns, with alarming success, to magic by the help of which he summons up a Fiend. The Fiend suggests a bargain and Faustus at last promises that the devil can have his soul if for twenty-four years he, Faustus, can see, do and have, anything he likes. The scene at the end of the play, when Faustus' last sunset is staining the sky red, and he most bitterly repents this bargain, is famous for its terrifying poetry.

A play of a very different sort is a parody of the old tales of chivalry, called 'The Knight of the Burning Pestle' by two authors, Beaumont and Fletcher. The story is that a citizen, his wife Nell, and their apprentice, come to see a play called 'The London Merchant'. The citizen soon jumps on to the stage and says indignantly that he can see that the author and the actors are going to laugh at honest London tradesmen. Why can't they either act the story of that successful fellow Sir Richard Whittington, or else do a play about a noble knight errant who is also, say, a grocer? (Of course the citizen himself is a grocer.) One of the actors naturally answers 'You should have told us your mind a month since! We are ready to begin!' But the citizen's blood is up, 'I *will* have a grocer! And he shall do wonderful things!' 'Let him kill a lion with a

Poetry written for the stage

Marlowe, 1564-1593
'Dr Faustus'

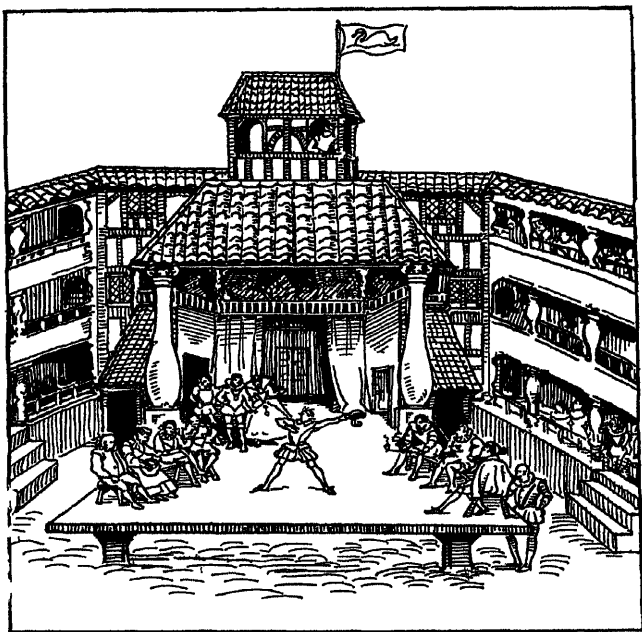
He sells his soul to the devil

A Comedy by Beaumont and Fletcher, 1579-1625

Knight of the Burning Pestle

A grocer and let him do wonderful things!

pestle !' calls out his wife Nell The poor actors protest that they have not got anyone to take the part of this grocer knight 'Husband, Husband !' cries Nell



'THE KNIGHT OF THE BURNING PESTLE' AT THE SWAN THEATRE

Ralph is making a speech Court gallants sit on the stage, and opposite them the citizen and his wife The rest of the audience can be seen in the galleries The Flag shows that a play is going on

'Let Ralph our apprentice play him !' The actors at last consent to fit in Ralph, and all through the play Nell and her husband sit on the stage chatting (see picture and explanation on this page) and interfering with the plot

The play is sometimes acted now, and is most enjoyable and ridiculous

Three more things must be spoken of out of all the thousands that could be said about the Elizabethans. The first is that England at that time led the world in music. One of the best of the composers was William Byrd. The second is that some of the most delightful of the shorter poems of the time were written not to be read, but to be sung to the lute.

The third thing is this, and it is the best worth remembering of all. This was a most famous period in English History, an age of daring and discovery, but it was an age in which nobody thought it silly for a person who wanted to do things also to be fond of poetry and music. Everyone, man or woman, rich merchant or dandified courtier, young apprentice, poor man or woman who could neither read nor write, was expected as a matter of course to be able either to sing, to play an instrument, to tell a tale, or to dance gracefully, and to enjoy the best that was to be had in poetry.

POINTS TO BE NOTICED ABOUT PART I

(1440 TO 1603)

1 Explorations made by sailors of many nations made people realize that the world was much larger than they had supposed and in America vast treasures were found.

2 On the Continent and particularly in Italy, Belgium and North Germany, the Renaissance brought new beauty into the world.

3 Meanwhile in England the first of the Tudors, Henry VII, ruled over a country exhausted by the long Wars of the Roses and, to the general relief of most people, established a strong government.

4 Henry VIII attacked the Church which still claimed a good deal of independence, and the 'English Reformation' led to a break with Rome and the distribution of lands held by the Monasteries. Most people do not seem to have minded these changes, but Sir Thomas More was one of those who suffered because he remained faithful to the Catholic Church.

5 New silver, both from the New and the Old World, and Henry VIII's debasing of the coinage made prices rise. The

enclosing of the old commons and fields drove many of those who worked on the land to great distress. In Edward VI's reign this distress came to a head in riot and rebellion.

6 Edward was a Protestant but was succeeded by his half-sister Mary who was a Catholic. Several Protestant Bishops were burned and when Elizabeth, her Protestant half-sister, succeeded in her turn, the country was neither rich nor peaceful.

7 Elizabeth and her advisers managed to settle the religious question.

8 English sailors began to take part in discovery and trade with the New World.

9 Some commanders found capturing Spanish treasure ships more profitable and exciting than trade. Spain attempted to wipe out the 'nest of pirates and protestants' ruled by Elizabeth, but their great fleet, the Armada, was defeated.

10 The Elizabethan age is famous for its great poets.

11 The sources for this period are the official records of the government, the reports of speeches in Parliament, the private letters of statesmen, merchants and country gentlemen, the stories told by sailors and adventurers when they returned from their voyages, the records of towns and guilds, and the plays and poems of the time.

PART II

CHAPTER 31

SCOTTISH KING AND ENGLISH PARLIAMENT

(1603 TO ABOUT 1610)

QUEEN ELIZABETH died on the 24th March 1603, and there was no doubt in most people's minds as to who was heir to the throne. James VI of Scotland, who was the son of Elizabeth's old rival Mary Queen of Scots, was proclaimed King, travelled down unopposed and was duly crowned. There seemed to be a great deal to be said for him. The question of religion was still most important, and James was a Protestant. Also he was King of Scotland, and it was an excellent thing that the two countries should have the same King. Scotland kept her own laws and customs, but there was now less danger of war. He himself came to England with the reputation of being a learned and intelligent man. In fact everything seemed in his favour and he did not find half the difficulties that Elizabeth had found when she began to reign. The country was prosperous. It is true that the war with Spain was still going on, but the Spaniards were doing badly and were glad to make peace.

But it was soon discovered that things were not so favourable as they seemed. The fact that the country was more prosperous made it in some ways more difficult to govern. As the merchants and country gentry got

richer they became less and less willing simply to take orders from the King. Instead, they wanted a greater share in the work of government themselves. Moreover, James turned out to be anything but a clever ruler. Though he was certainly learned, he was also tactless, undecided, peevish and conceited, and had no idea of moving with changing times.

II

Quarrel with
the Puritans

One of the first mistakes that he made was over religion. James I was a Calvinist—that is a Protestant—so that the Puritans felt sure that he would be on their side. On the other hand the Catholics hoped that he would remember that his mother had been a Catholic. Soon after he became King, eight hundred Puritan clergymen sent him a petition, asking for leave to wear surplices or not as they liked, for alterations in the Church service, for more sermons and a stricter observance of Sunday. James called a conference between his bishops and representatives of the Puritan clergy in the hopes of settling the affair. The bishops refused to allow any alterations. The King supported the bishops and when the Puritans refused to withdraw their demands he lost his temper and threatened to 'harry them out of the land' if they would not conform. The quarrel that now began between the King and those of his subjects who were Puritans got steadily worse for the next forty years.

Quarrel with
the Catholics

James quarrelled with the Catholics in a different way. At first he began by giving them rather more liberty. He allowed priests to go about openly, and did not insist on the heavy fine (£20 a month) with which Elizabeth had punished families who stayed away from their parish churches. But as soon as he had done this, a surprisingly large number of people declared that they were Catholics. The King, alarmed, began to persecute again. He was a timid man, had always been suspicious of his English subjects, and soon began to see plots all about him. For instance, he accused Sir Walter Raleigh

of plotting treason with the Spaniards, against whom Raleigh had fought all his life and Raleigh was executed. Now James's treatment of the Catholics drove them to make a plot of whose reality there is no doubt at all—the Gunpowder Plot. Robert Catesby and Guy Fawkes dug a passage from a neighbouring house to a room under the House of Lords. Into this room they put two tons of gunpowder in barrels. The plan was to blow up the King and the members of both Houses of Parliament, and then to set up a Roman Catholic government with James's young son, Charles, as King. There is no need to tell any English boy or girl the day and month when this was to be done.

Gunpowder
Plot, 1605,
Guy Fawkes

The plot was discovered in time, and to this day watchmen search the cellars of the Houses of Parliament before the beginning of each session. Always timid, and now horrified at his narrow escape, James made Parliament pass severe laws against all Catholics. Thus James soon managed to make quite a large number of his subjects dislike him.

But his persecution of the Catholics did not make him as unpopular as the reader might expect, for England was fast becoming more Puritan. One of the reasons was that the Catholic Church forbade any but the clergy to read the Bible. But what we now read—the Authorized Version—had just been published, and for the first time everyone could read the Bible or have it read to them. In its new and splendid translation into what was then the most modern English, the Bible became the most popular book in England. Everywhere serious people wanted to discuss it. It was new to them and there were a hundred different ways of interpreting its tales and parables and of deciding what they really meant. So for the first time simple men and women began not just piously to attend Church services, but really to think for themselves and talk about religion.

England is
becoming
Protestant

The Bible

One curious and dreadful consequence of this stir about religion was that it was discovered that here and

One dreadful
consequence

Witches and
Warlocks

there, scattered about in country places, there were quite a number of people who were not Christians at all, but believed in something that was very like the old religion of the Stone and Bronze Ages. Such people, mostly poor, had gone on all through the Middle Ages holding their Witches Sabbaths and doing a more or less regular trade in both white and black magic. But by Elizabeth's and James's reigns the old religion—being a Witch or a



A FAMILY GROUP AT THE TIME OF JAMES I

Warlock—had come down in the world, so that when the worst persecutions began, with hangings and torture and witch burnings by the hundred, the victims were mostly poor and ignorant old women who for a small fee mumbled old spells to cure or to kill their neighbours' cattle or to raise a wind for a sailor. The queerest part about the whole business was that most people, the judges who condemned them and the witches and warlocks themselves, firmly believed that they had magical powers.

III

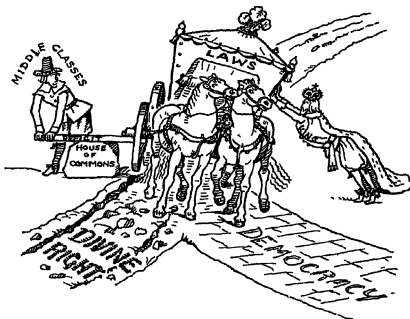
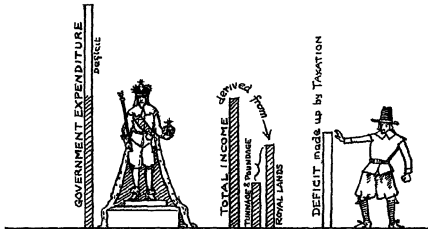
Ever since the disorder of the Wars of the Roses, there had been a general feeling in England that once a man or a woman had been crowned it was best on the whole to obey them. Such ideas had grown up in many other countries. The theory of the 'Divine Right of Kings' suggested that treason was not only a crime but also a sin in the sight of God. This idea was one with which James, like most kings, heartily agreed.

The state of monarchy [said James] is the supreme thing upon earth. kings are God's lieutenants upon earth and sit upon God's throne. As to dispute what God may do is blasphemy, so it is treason in subjects to dispute what a king may do in the height of his power. I will not be content that my power be disputed on.

This was said in a speech to Parliament, and since James wanted the Commons to grant him some money, this was a tactless way to talk. The disputes between King and Commons, that later grew so serious, were really about who was to have the last word in governing England.

Across the sea were countries such as Spain where the power of the Kings had been absolute for a long time and in France the royal power was growing. 'England,' said a member of the House of Commons, 'is the last monarchy that yet retains her liberties.'

Now it had always been the custom for kings to pay the ordinary expenses of government out of the income that they got from the Crown Lands and from taxes on goods brought into the country. Parliament voted these custom duties for his whole life to each king when he came to the throne. The most important of them were called Tunnage and Poundage because they were taxes on each tun, or barrel, of wine, and on each pound's worth of goods brought in from abroad. But prices had been rising steadily ever since the time of Henry VII. Like everything else, the work of government cost more and more. Try as they would, the Tudor kings and queens had never been able to raise their rents enough,



Look at the top picture first

The King's income does not cover what he has to spend on governing

Will the Commons make up the deficit by voting taxes ?

Underneath you see how the middle classes use the deficit and the House of Commons to lever the coach of State and Laws away from ' Divine Right ' towards Democracy

or to get enough extra from Tunnage and Poundage to catch up the rising prices

Each king since Henry VII had made matters worse by selling some of the Crown Lands, and had spent the money, so that James I and his son Charles I had, regularly, to get Parliament to vote more taxes. But what was to happen to the Divine Right of Kings (in which James, and later Charles, so firmly believed) if they were always having to go to Parliament for money, and if, when they did, Parliament was always going to bargain and say 'Not unless you do this or that in return'?

Lands had
been sold

Not
unless

Parliament was powerful because it represented the new middle class of country gentlemen and merchants, which had long been growing in importance, and which was now the most powerful class in England. They were prosperous through trading and landowning, and they were the most go-ahead people in the country. They were nearly all Protestants and men of the new age, who wanted to be rid of the authority of the Pope in religion and who wanted to be free to run their business on their estates in what seemed to them the best way. Through having sat in Parliament themselves, or through having elected people to represent them, they had for a long time been in touch with the business of governing the country, and they believed that if the laws and the foreign policy of a country cannot be altered to suit a new way of living, then either the new way of living or the old way of governing has to go. In the rest of Europe the Catholic religion and the old way of governing seemed to be winning. They complained that kings were 'overthrowing Parliaments throughout Christendom' and reducing people like themselves 'to wear only wooden shoes on their feet'.

The new
Country
gentlemen
and
merchants

They do not
want an abso-
lute King

In Europe

What would happen in England?

Quite a number of people who disliked either Catholicism or the power of kings or both, or who simply wanted to get rich, began to turn their eyes away beyond England to new lands across the Atlantic

CHAPTER 32

THE FIRST ENGLISH COLONIES

(ABOUT 1607 TO 1621)

Hope of trade
with the
Colonies

King, mer-
chants and
landowners
stood to gain

THE reader will remember (Chapter 29) that in the reign of Elizabeth, English seamen had begun to follow the first Portuguese and Spanish explorers and had sailed round the world. In the reign of James I and Charles I there was less exploration and piracy, but a serious effort was made to establish colonies in the new lands. The idea was that the new colonists were to grow hemp for rigging, flax for sail canvas, tobacco, sugar and currants, and also to produce such things as timber, salt fish and furs. In exchange they would buy the things that England exported—especially woollen cloth. Many people were interested in increasing trade. The King, because extra trade brought him in extra taxes, the merchants and cloth manufacturers because they lived by it, while the landowners and the farmers wanted to sell their wool. So all the most important people in England agreed that it was a good thing to establish colonies in America and elsewhere.

'Unruly
Gallants'
and
Unemployed

Some people also thought of colonies as places to which 'unruly gallants' could be sent. They were also thought of as places to which the unemployed might go. The squeezing of the peasants off the land by enclosures and sheep-farming had left a lot of people with no settled way of getting a living. When they were out of a job, many of them turned to crime. So both those who sympathized with the unemployed, and those who were

afraid of them, welcomed the idea of sending them to America to get new lands for themselves. Attempts had already been made to establish settlements in America—particularly in Virginia which was named to commemorate the Queen who never married. But colonization costs money. The settlers needed clothes and food and tools from England for which they could not pay until they had built their homes, grown crops and opened up trade with the natives. The Elizabethan attempts at colonization had all failed because there was not enough money behind them. But capital was needed

II

But, in the days of James, merchants came more and more to think of putting their money in colonies. As soon as enough capital was provided, colonization became a success. Companies of London merchants began to send out settlers to North America and were given exclusive rights of trade in large areas, and also the right to govern the colonists sent out. In 1607 a new settlement was made at Jamestown (named after James I) in Virginia. It had to meet many difficulties but it won through, partly because of the leadership of a certain Captain John Smith. At first the new colonists—'unruly gallants' who had hoped to find rivers of gold or forests of spices—refused to do the necessary work of cutting trees, building houses and planting corn, but John Smith managed to make them work and, moreover, to make peace with the Indian tribes who, creeping silent through the forest, had already killed many of the 'Whiteskins'. This was not managed without terrific adventures. The story goes that once, while he was trying to buy food from the Indians, he was captured by a hostile tribe and was just going to be tortured, when the chief's little daughter Pocahontas begged for his life. Smith was untied and sent back to the colony. Later on Pocahontas came to stay among the white men, married John Rolfe, one of the settlers and later came to London. There is Merchants begin to form companies to send out colonists Captain John Smith Pocahontas

willing to try their luck in America. Moreover, as the years passed, the religious and political quarrels in England became more bitter, so that some Catholics and even more Puritans went to America in the hope that there they could have their own way in religion and politics. Between 1618 and 1641 about eighty thousand people seem to have sailed across the Atlantic, and by 1641 there was a chain of English settlements down the American coast. Both the Dutch and the French also sent out colonists to settlements of their own, but neither sent as many as the English. In the North was the English colony of Newfoundland. In what is now the United States there were the Puritan colonies of New England, the Catholic colony of Maryland, and the original colony of Virginia. Further south there were settlements in the Bermudas, in the Barbados and in the Leeward Islands.

A new life
overseas

From New-
foundland to
the West
Indies

The story of each of these new colonies is exceedingly interesting, for all of them had many adventures. Some solved their first difficulties by buying negroes to work as slaves, some had terrible wars with the Indians. Unfortunately there is not space here to tell all these stories. But something must be said of the families who set out from Plymouth in the ship *Mayflower*. These people were Puritans who would not accept the Church of England services made compulsory by James I. They meant to go to Virginia, but they sailed in September and the autumn storms carried the *Mayflower* much further north, to what is now Massachusetts. Here they found themselves in a new, unsettled country and they drew up what is called 'The Mayflower Compact'. In it they agreed to have their own government and obey laws framed by the whole body of settlers. This was the first written plan for a self-governing community made in America. The climate of Massachusetts was much colder than that of Virginia and the little company suffered so severely from the snow and cold that half of their original number (one hundred and two) died.

Story too
long to tell
here

Mayflower,
1620

Unlike some of the other colonists ' the Pilgrim Fathers ', as they were called, did not try to cheat the Indians and were therefore helped by them. Those who had survived the first terrible winter learned from the Indians to grow the crops of the country. At the end of the first summer they realized that there would be food



PURITAN CITIZEN AND HIS WIFE

Her hat is worn over her linen cap (as on p. 42) and as in Welsh national costume. Notice her high pattens, made of iron with a leather strap, to keep her shoes out of the mud.

First
' Thanks-
giving Din-
ner ', 1621

enough to last through the winter, and settlers and Indians made a feast together of Indian corn, venison and wild turkey, which they called ' Thanksgiving '. To this day all Americans celebrate this feast.

III

Trade with
the East

Trade with the East was also becoming important, but India and the other countries in southern Asia were already thickly populated and the climate was too hot for white settlers. Yet the English merchants were determined to get a share in the silk and spice trade,

and in 1600 a group of Londoners joined together to form the famous East India Company to which the Queen gave the sole right of trading between England, India and the Far East

This, by the way, was what was called a 'Joint Stock Company', and since there will be more later about such companies the reader must understand what they were. In most trades each merchant dealt on his own, independently of his fellows. He might send his goods in the same ship as theirs, but when he was buying and selling he competed with them. But in a joint stock company all the merchants put their money together, goods were bought and sold jointly, and at the end the profits were shared among the members of the company.

Under James I and Charles I the East India Company gradually established a chain of depots (called factories) in India and the Spice Islands. Progress was slow because they had to meet the opposition of the Portuguese and Dutch who had got there first. But gradually, through these factories, there grew a prosperous trade in silk and spices. It was on the basis of these factories that the British Empire in India was later built up.

IV

The factories in the East and the colonies in the West had all been established either because people wanted to trade, or because they wanted religious or political liberty. But nearer England there were other 'plantations' or colonies made with other and less excusable objects. Then, as later, the rulers of England could not find a way to keep Ireland in subjection, and it was decided to try the method of settling English colonists there. The colonists would, it was thought, save the expense of keeping a regular army in the country. Elizabeth had tried the idea when the Earl of Desmond rebelled in Munster. His lands were confiscated and given to Englishmen. But, as it turned out, these Englishmen preferred to collect rents from the existing Irish tenants.

and did not bring over English farmers as Elizabeth meant them to, so the scheme did not make much difference to Irish life. But later, the Earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnel rebelled in Ulster, and James I determined definitely to try the idea of colonization. Half a million acres of their lands were seized and given to English landlords. The Irish peasants were turned out, and this time many English and Scottish settlers were brought in. Many thousands of the unfortunate Irish starved in consequence. The result of the experiment can be seen now. To-day in the north of Ireland many people are Protestants, whereas the rest of the country is mainly Catholic. Ulster is still part of the United Kingdom, having refused to join the rest of the country to form the Irish Free State.

Under
James I

Results can
be seen now

CHAPTER 33

SHALL KING OR PARLIAMENT DECIDE?

(ABOUT 1610 TO 1642)

If readers will have a good look at the chart on page 62 and read the explanation under it, they will see what the struggle that flared up into the Civil War was about. Under the Tudors no one had ever successfully fought the Crown. It was clear now that there was to be one central government. But the new middle class were not, if they could help it, going to let that government be controlled only by the kings.

Who is to control the Government?

Of course the quarrel was not really as simple as it is (purposely) made to look in the picture. The picture, for instance, says nothing about religion, nothing about the great mass of the people who cultivated the land, and wove the cloth, and nothing about what was happening abroad. But all these things came in, and to people living at the time these other things were extremely important.

To take the religious question first. There were really three main groups of people who could not agree. On one side the Puritans, on the other the Catholics, and in the middle the Church of England party. King James (as was said in the chapter before last) quarrelled with the Puritans in the first year of his reign, later he made that quarrel worse by two things. by appointing Church bishops at home and by making peace with Catholic Spain abroad.

Three Groups who did not agree
(1) Puritans
(2) Catholics
(3) Church of England Party

Fourteen years after this peace, there broke out the

Thirty Years War in Germany, 1618-1648 war spoken of in the last chapter It was fought between two rival parties in what are now Germany, Czechoslovakia and Austria All sorts of issues were involved in it, but at the time, many people regarded it chiefly as a war between Catholics and Protestants At first the Catholics won, and many English Protestants wanted to join in on the Protestant side, especially as one of the first things that the victorious Catholics did was to turn James's very popular Protestant son-in-law out of the Palatinate of which he was the ruler But James would not decide to fight for the Protestants He hoped that he might be able to help them in another way It was suggested that James's son, Charles, should marry a Spanish Princess

Spanish marriage for Charles ?

Charles marries Henrietta Maria

The very idea of an alliance with Spain made the Puritans furious and the fact that James failed to bring it about did not make him any better liked Moreover, though Charles did not in the end marry the Spanish Princess, he did marry a Catholic—Henrietta Maria of France This match was nearly as unpopular with the Puritans as the Spanish marriage would have been

James is not at all popular

This sort of foreign policy made James disliked by a large and important group of his subjects

At home he was annoying the whole of the middle class, whether they were Puritan or not, by the things he did when he tried to make up the difference (look at the chart again) between his revenue and what he had to spend on governing

Monopolies, James and Charles revive them

He annoyed the country gentlemen by trying to get more money out of those who were his tenants (just as they had squeezed their own tenants) He annoyed the merchants by making the custom duties higher and by reviving and using, unwisely, an old right of the Kings and Queens of England This was the right of selling Monopolies (that is the exclusive right to trade in some particular thing) If they did not want to sell them they could grant them as rewards or give them instead of paying debts in cash Monopolies were resented not

only by the merchants who wanted to trade, but also by the consumers of the goods, who found that, once a man had got the sole right to trade in anything, he always raised the price

Naturally merchants began to blame 'Royal Interference' for everything that went wrong, whether it was really James's fault or not. Feeling was very bitter, for in about 1620, a time of bad trade began, buyers in Holland and Germany were feeling the effects of the Thirty Years War. 'Royal Interference' blamed

The members of the different Parliaments that James summoned became more and more dissatisfied. They wanted to have their say both in foreign affairs and in what went on at home.

James, believing firmly in his 'divine right', furiously forbade Parliament 'to meddle with anything concerning our government or deep matters of state'.

The House of Commons drew up a protest in which they said they had a right of free speech on any subject whatever. James at once dissolved Parliament and imprisoned some of the members. Such was the state of things when James I died. Parliament ordered 'not to meddle'

II

Charles I, who had married the Catholic princess Henrietta Maria, succeeded him. He got on no better with his first Parliaments than his father had done. He, too, believed in the divine right of Kings, and like his father he had to go to a Parliament whose members were determined to have their say before they made up the difference between the King's income and what had to be spent. Charles I, 1625

Ever since the time of Henry VII the customs duties, Tunnage and Poundage (see page 61) had been granted to each new King or Queen for life. Charles's first Parliament granted them to him for only one year. Another Parliament that met in 1626 demanded an inquiry into the way in which the war with Spain Tunnage and Poundage only granted for a year 1626

(which Charles had declared) was being carried on, also into the conduct of the King's chief minister, the Duke of Buckingham. When Charles said that he did not choose that the House of Commons should question his servants, the Commons impeached Buckingham, that is to say, they put him on his trial before the House of Lords. Before Charles' third Parliament met in 1628



COURTIER AND LADY OF THE REIGN OF CHARLES I

Charles had levied a forced loan and five knights had refused to pay it. The five knights were defended by a lawyer who said that according to Magna Carta the King had no right either to demand the loan or to imprison the knights. There seemed doubt about the law, so the Commons drew up 'The Petition of Right'. In this document it was laid down that the King had no right to levy loans and taxes without the consent of Parliament, or to imprison people without proper trial. Charles reluctantly agreed to sign the Petition but—almost as angry as John at having to sign Magna Carta—he soon dissolved a Parliament that had proved so determined.

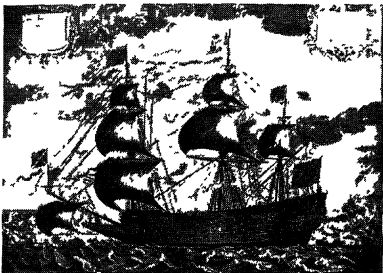
1628
Petition of
Right

King signs
but dissolves
Parliament

Charles now made up his mind that—for as long, at least, as his money lasted—he would govern without a Parliament. Now that he could not get the necessary extra supplies by new taxes legally raised, he and his advisers had to think of all sorts of ways and means to get money.

Can he
manage
without

Parliament had only thought of making him promise not to raise the newer kind of taxes, so what Charles



'THE SOVEREIGN OF THE SEAS', THE BEST SHIP OF
CHARLES' NAVY

did was to revive old feudal dues. For instance, there were still a good many landowners who held their estates by 'military tenure' and now the wealthiest of them who had neglected to get themselves knighted had to pay a fine to the King. (Among them was a certain Huntingdonshire squire named Oliver Cromwell.) Then he revived ancient claims to lands that had once been part of one of the Royal Forests, but which were now cultivated. Most unpopular of all was the tax known as 'Ship Money'. Since the time of Henry VIII there

Old feudal
dues

Ship Money

had been a small and often badly equipped Royal Navy, but before that time the King had had a right to make merchant ships go and fight for him. Charles, in 1634, revived this right, but demanded, instead of the use of a few ships for a time, a money payment from all seaport towns. Two years later he said that not only the seaports but all the counties of England must pay this tax.

The seas were abominably troubled by pirates (chiefly from Algiers) and it must have seemed reasonable to Charles that he should raise money for a navy to protect English shipping. But this was just the sort of tax that might make the King permanently independent of Parliament. So when John Hampden refused to pay Ship Money and was prosecuted by the Crown, his case quickly became famous, and a great many of his fellow squire sided with Hampden and against the judges who decided that the King had the law on his side.

III

Archbishop
Laud

During the whole of this time William Laud, the Archbishop of Canterbury, seemed, to many people, also to be trying to put the clock back.

The reader will remember that when Henry VIII broke away from the authority of the Pope, he had not really much changed the way of worshipping God in the churches, and that only a few people had really wanted change. But now things were different. There were still many Catholics in England, but most people had gradually come round more and more to the Puritan way of thinking.

Laud wanted to go back to things as they had been soon after the Reformation. People said that he 'laboured to bring in an English Popery'. Charles, who was himself High Church and married to a Catholic, was willing to support Laud's policy—for instance, only to give livings to clergymen who were in Laud's opinion 'orthodox'.

Now the reader must remember that Charles was King

not only of England but also of Scotland, but that unlike his father James, he had never lived there and knew very little about his Scottish subjects. Therefore when Laud suggested that it would be a good thing to make the Scottish as well as the English Church orthodox too, and that five Scottish Bishops had helped him to draw up a new Prayer Book for Scotland, neither he nor Charles seemed to have any idea of what hatred and resistance the new Prayer Book would meet with. For Scottish Protestants were even more Puritan than those in England. Thousands of people, rich and poor, bound themselves with an oath or Covenant to have nothing to do with such 'Idolatry' and 'Popery'.

Laud tries to make Scotland Orthodox too

The Covenanters, 1637

After a year of rioting whenever any clergyman attempted to read the new Prayer Book, Charles decided that he would, if necessary, reconquer Scotland at the head of an army. The difficulty was that he had no army. He had managed to govern alone for eleven years, but could he form and keep together an army without the help of Parliament? An army would want food and pay, where was the money to come from?

Charles will force the Scots

With some scratch troops gathered together in the north Charles at last, in 1649, marched against the Scots. But they were far too strong for him and he was soon obliged to bargain with them, to disband his men, and to go home.

First Bishops' War, 1639

Peace, however, did not last long. By now the King's chief adviser was the Earl of Strafford, who had been ruling Ireland for him. There he had used strict methods with great success, and he felt sure that the King had only to be firm and not mind using force against his English and Scottish subjects to make himself absolute. Feeling sure that he would know how to make it obey, he advised Charles to summon a Parliament. But this, called the Short Parliament, was just as hostile as the Parliaments of eleven years before had been. Led by John Pym it refused to vote any taxes until its grievances were remedied, and Charles soon dissolved it.

The Short Parliament, 1640

The Second
Bishops'
War, 1640

The Short Parliament had done more than just refuse to help the King, it had taught the Scots that most of the people of England were on their side. Therefore, when Charles once more gathered an army against them, they boldly marched into England to meet him. Only one small battle was fought, for Charles could not rely on his troops to fight against the Protestant Scots. In the peace made at Ripon, Charles had to grant the Covenanters all they asked, to pay their expenses while they stayed in England, and to promise them a large sum of money to go home.

Now the Scots had a double purpose in demanding this money. They knew that Charles' only way of getting it was to summon a Parliament, and they knew that Parliament would be Puritan.

CHAPTER 34

CIVIL WAR

(1640 TO 1646)

SURE enough, when the new Parliament met it was found to be made up of members determined that never again should a king govern as Charles had done for the last eleven years

1640
The Long
Parliament
meets

Pym, Hampden, the Earl of Bedford, the man who afterwards became Lord Manchester, and a number of other Lords and Commoners had been very active during the last months, and during the general election, Pym and Hampden set off on a riding tour. Wherever they went they urged the squires or the burgesses to choose a Puritan as their new member.

Pym and
Hampden
ride through
the country

Many of the most unpopular of Charles' courtiers and ministers fled abroad. Charles himself recalled Strafford to London, promising 'on the word of a king' that Strafford 'should not suffer in his person, honour, or fortune'.

But Strafford was a man who was greatly feared by the whole Parliamentary party, as being both clever and determined to make Charles an absolute king. Archbishop Laud was sent to the Tower and in March 1641 the Commons accused Strafford before the Lords of high treason. The trial took place in St Stephen's Hall, Charles sat behind a lattice. 'The King never heard a lecture of so free language against his idolized prerogative'. Pym brought up words that Strafford was said to have spoken.

Strafford
impeached
March 1641

Go on with a vigorous war as you first designed, loose and absolved from all rules of government—you have an army in Ireland you may employ here to reduce this Kingdom

What is
treason ?

To a Parliamentarian the words sounded wicked enough But were they treason ? For treason was an attack on the King or on his authority Pym's argument was that anything that estranged the King from his subjects was 'blackest treason' Lands, he said, where the ruler was free from all rules of government were—

'Frequent in combustion, full of massacres and the tragical end of Princes'

An Act of
Attainder

The Army
Plot

Strafford
executed,
May 1641

The Lords, however, were doubtful whether an attempt to make the King absolute could be treason But both Houses agreed that Strafford was the man who might be able to do what Charles himself could not, that is restore the King's absolute power So both Houses passed an Act of Attainder saying that Strafford deserved to die, and ordering his execution The King hated to give his consent He tried to win over the Parliamentary leaders, but at the same time he was planning to rescue Strafford from the Tower by marching down the army from Yorkshire Pym got to hear of the plot and told Parliament what Charles was brewing The citizens of London heard of it too There were riots, and when Strafford was at last beheaded, two hundred thousand London citizens watched the execution

Charles signs
all the bills

Summer,
1641

Strafford's execution and Laud's imprisonment were only a beginning All the ways of getting money that Charles had used were now declared by Parliament to be illegal After this a king of England would either have to meet all the expenses of government out of his private income—which was impossible—or else ask Parliament for money All that spring the two Houses sat passing bill after bill, curtailing the King's power Charles signed them all

Much of the Royal power had been destroyed for ever by the time the summer came and, as it turned out, the

work of the first few months of the Long Parliament was never afterwards undone. But soon difficulties began to appear

Long Par-
liament's
work never
undone

Charles, having failed to defend his authority by peaceful means, came more and more to think of force. The Queen had already asked the Pope to send men and money to bring the English to heel. Strafford had suggested using an army from Ireland, and Charles himself had thought of using the army that had been collected to fight the Scots to rescue poor Strafford. Now Charles



Though John Strachey was on the Parliamentary side, he looks like a 'Cavalier'. (He was an ancestor of one of the authors.)

began to gather round him a band of unemployed officers and gentlemen's sons who acted as his bodyguard. With their long hair and their habit of always wearing swords, Charles' new bodyguard were nicknamed 'Cavaliers'. They jeered back at the London citizens and called them 'Roundheads', because it was the City fashion for men to wear their hair cut short, rather as it is to-day. Later, these two nicknames were used for all the supporters of King and Parliament.

Another difficulty was this. As the reforming movement went on with growing success, its supporters began

to divide into two parties those who wanted to call a halt and those who wanted to go on still further. Such a split nearly always occurs in times of rapid change. During the course of the year, this split was deepened by quarrels over two problems. The extremists wanted to abolish bishops and the Prayer Book, the moderates wanted to keep both. In October the Catholics in Ireland rose in revolt and massacred many of the Protestants who had previously oppressed them. Both sides agreed that an army must be sent to crush the rebellion. But the extreme Parliament men wanted Parliament to appoint the officers. They feared that if the King were allowed to appoint them, Parliament and its supporters would soon find the army being used against them instead of against the Irish. But the moderates in Parliament thought the King ought to appoint military commanders as he had always done. They saw that there was a risk, but they felt that there was an even greater risk that the extremists would appoint their own friends and then use the army to establish their own views in England.

By the winter of 1641, there was a strong party in both the Lords and the Commons, who, although they did not think much of the King, preferred to trust him to observe the newly passed laws than to follow the extremists in making more changes.

II

Charles All through these months Charles had not been able to make up his mind, but had made up for obediently signing the bills that Parliament sent him by making secret plans with the Queen, his Cavalier officers, the Pope's agents, and with dissatisfied Scots. Whatever he signed he was still quite unwilling to be a 'Constitutional Monarch' and live at peace with his Parliament.

January 1642 In January 1642 he heard that the House of Commons intended to impeach the Queen. Urged on by her, Charles countered by accusing five leading members (Pym and Hampden were two of them) of high treason.

for intriguing with the Scots Charles tried to arrest the members himself and went down to the House of Commons with 400 of his armed Cavaliers, only to find that (the words are his) 'the birds had flown' No King had, by custom, the right to interfere with the Commons in this way The five members had taken refuge in the City, where he dared not follow them, and Charles dared not try again Both sides now began to look about to see how they could defend themselves Charles, knowing, from the mobs that rioted round Whitehall, that the citizens of London would never support him, set up the Royal Standard in Nottingham, and began to gather together from all over the country those who were on his side In London, though some left to join Charles, three hundred members of the House of Commons and thirty Peers still sat, and they too began to gather an army

August 1642
The remains
of the Long
Parliament
still sits

III

Now there are two things that the reader ought specially to notice One is that the Parliamentary party, though it was supported by the poorer citizens of London, was not a poor man's party So the English Civil War was a war between two sets of well-off people On the Parliamentary side were the middle-class country gentlemen and richer citizens who wanted to govern the country in their way, who wanted the Puritan religion to be the religion of the State, who wanted to prevent the King from interfering in matters of trade, and who knew very well that if they were to flourish they must have control of such things as taxes and relations with foreign countries On his side Charles gathered together his own courtiers and the people who for one reason or another did not want change

Parliament
stood for
middle-class
and
Puritanism

King's men,
High Church,
Catholics
and Great
Landowners

The other thing is this Most of the people of England did not at first, or indeed ever, take sides at all Only in London did the poorer people, that is as always the great majority of people, in the least want to fight Clarendon, a historian who was writing about his own

The mass of
the people
did not want
to take sides

times, says that both sides had to 'piess' most of their foot soldiers—that is to force them to join

In all parts of the Kingdom the number of those who desired to sit still was greater than those who desired to engage in either party

Before the end of the war all the gentry and most of the yeomen and merchants had been dragged in on one side or the other, but to the end most poor country people were neutral

These two points are often forgotten, because the histories and the letters from which later historians learn about the struggle were mostly written by people who were hot on one side or the other. On the whole the North and West were for the King and the South and East for Parliament

Most towns were for Parliament, but the University town of Oxford was one of several exceptions. Charles and his Court often made it their headquarters, and there was at least one of Charles' followers who was glad to pause there in order to get on with work he was doing. This was Dr William Harvey who had made the great discovery that the blood circulates in the bodies of humans and animals. Harvey was now, amid all the disturbance and hurry of the times, trying to find out how the heart of a living creature develops. Aubrey, who wrote a diary of these times, says

I saw Harvey at Oxford, but was too young then to be acquainted with the great Doctor. He had a hen to hatch eggs in his room, which eggs he opened daily

Harvey was repeating Aristotle's experiment and was watching the development of the chick's heart. Many other people were trying to carry on their work through the alarms of war

Before the war was over there had been some plundering by both sides, but on the whole there was less destruction than might have been expected. No part of England became a desert, as did many huge districts in Germany during the Thirty Years War

IV

Each side had to have someone to command the armies that they had raised. The chief general on the King's side was his nephew, Prince Rupert, a young man of twenty-three, who was already an experienced general, for he had seen service in Germany. The chief Parliamentary general was at first 'sweet and meek' Lord Manchester. The difficulty about Lord Manchester was that he 'did not want to beat the King too much' and a



'STUMPWORK'

This needle work was padded to look like modelling—the faces were worked flat

month or two after the Parliamentary army had won an important battle at Marston Moor, which was never followed up, one of his officers, Oliver Cromwell, discussed the situation with him

Marston
Moor,
July 2nd 1642

'H,' said Manchester, 'you beat the King ninety-nine times, yet he is King still and so will his posterity be after him, but if the King beat us once, we shall all be hanged and our posterity be made slaves'

Cromwell answered

'My Lord if this be so why did we take up arms at first?'

Oliver Cromwell, was one of those who wanted 'full victory'

By this time the Parliamentarians too had a Scottish army helping them. This had been arranged by Pym who, unfortunately for Parliament, died soon after. The King had not only a Scottish army but had brought over troops from Ireland. With a general like Manchester at the head of the Parliamentary army it seemed as if there might be a deadlock. Parliament resolved that their army must be reorganized on a new model.

New Model
Army

They entrusted the work to Cromwell and there was set up 'The New Model Army' well officered, regularly paid, with good cavalry under Cromwell, and with new artillery. The next year this army, under General Fairfax, won a decisive victory at Naseby, against Prince Rupert.

Naseby,
June 1645

Among the things captured at Naseby was a box containing letters from and to the King, which showed how (largely through the Queen who was working for him abroad) he was doing his best to bring in a French, a Danish or any other foreign army he could get, to fight for him. This discovery set many moderate Parliamentarians more bitterly against him. The King's army was practically destroyed at Naseby, and after that, in the last eleven months, the war became a series of sieges, the New Model Army attacking small Royalist detachments that had shut themselves into a town or even a manor house. Charles himself was shut up in Oxford, but escaped from there in disguise and, as a last hope, joined his forces in Scotland. When he got there he found that there also the war had gone against him. In May Charles surrendered himself as prisoner to the Scottish Parliamentary army and was handed over by them to the English Parliament, who sent him to Holmby in Northamptonshire. Parliament had won the war and everyone asked themselves what was going to happen next.

King
surrendered
May 1646

CHAPTER 35

OLIVER CROMWELL

(1646 TO 1659)

It was clear, at least, that the middle class in England had won the struggle, and that now there could be no return to the 'Divine Right of Kings'. The Long Parliament had still been sitting all this time, and through it and through the New Model Army the middle class had won its victory. But these two facts did not by themselves settle the urgent question of the moment, which was this: By what section of the middle class, and how, was the country to be governed? A great many people had ideas on the subject. There were especially four groups who all wanted different things. Four Groups

(i) the King and his friends who would not admit that their defeat was final, (ii) the Long Parliament and its friends, (iii) a radical group of poor people and the stricter Puritans from the New Model Army, (iv) a much larger army group led by Oliver Cromwell.

II

To take the Royalists first: Charles was one of the The King and his friends only men in England who did not know that the Civil War had done something in England that could never be undone. He acted as if he believed that things could be as before. There was no immediate movement to depose him, he was not kept a strict prisoner, and he employed himself in trying to play off the army against the Parliament, and the Scots against both. He himself

escaped to Carisbrooke Castle in the Isle of Wight and the war flared up again. Parliament and the New Model Army under Cromwell had been nearly separated for ever by their own disagreements as to how the governing of England was to be arranged, but they united again in their fear of Charles. When he was again in their power they lost no time in bringing him to trial in Westminster Hall, before a special Committee of the House of Commons and in declaring him guilty of treason against his people. As Mr G M Trevelyan says in his history of this time 'It is much easier to show that the execution was a mistake than to show what else could have been done.'

Execution of
Charles I,
January 1649

King's last
words

Charles in his dying speech showed that he would never really have been the sort of Constitutional King to which the new England could have been loyal. As he stood on the scaffold he repeated his belief that the people were happiest and freest without a share in the government.

The King's
son

But the Royalist cause did not die with the death of Charles I. He left a son who was immediately acknowledged as king by the Royalists, so that there was still fighting, chiefly in Scotland and Ireland. Cromwell, who was, as a rule, humane in England, behaved with shocking cruelty in Ireland and not much better in Scotland, where the war still dragged on till 1654.

Battle of
Worcester,
1651

In England it was over sooner. In the early autumn of 1651, the second Charles was finally defeated at Worcester and, after hiding for six weeks with a price on his head, he at last escaped to his mother in France.

In Scotland and Ireland there was still danger from Royalists and Catholics for the next three years. This was one of the things that made Cromwell always insist on a stable government rather than a good government. He said he would 'lay hold of anything if it had but the force of authority.'

III

Parliament, when the war was over, had very clear ideas about what it did not want but was less clear and certainly most unimaginative in deciding what it did want. Unfortunately Pym and Hampden had both died during the war. Parliament had the only legal power in England, but it had no members who had any new ideas. Jealousy and grab were the keynotes of their policy. They were jealous of the New Model Army and wanted to disband it without giving the soldiers the back pay that was due to them. Their only idea of dealing with those who had fought on the King's side was to take their estates by means of heavy fines, while in religion they wanted to set up a new Presbyterian Church and to suppress all the many other Puritan sects whose members had helped to give them victory.

What did
Parliament
want?

IV

In the New Model Army there was a whole set of men who had either joined because they believed that Parliament had all along been fighting for the people, or else who, in the course of the war, had begun to think that it was time something was done for the great mass of Englishmen and women. These people did not all think alike, for instance, there was John Lillburne, 'Freeborn John', who stood in general for 'Liberty'.

'Levellers'

Another set of them considered that the most important thing, now that the war was over, was for people to get land to farm. When nobody did anything about settling the men who had served in the New Model Army on the land again, a small group of them took possession of a piece of waste ground in Surrey.

'Diggers'

We plough and dig [wrote Winstanley, one of their leaders] that the poor may get a comfortable livelihood and think that people were We have a right to do it by virtue of the conquest over the late king who had William the Conqueror's title to the land. But if the Norman power is still upheld we have lost by sticking

What poor
people were
thinking

to the Parliament We joined them, relying on their promises of freedom of land, and claim freedom to enjoy the common lands, bought by our money and blood We claim it by equality in the contest Parliament and Army said they acted *for the whole nation, you gentry have your enclosures free, and we claim a freedom in the common land* If the land were granted there would not be a beggar or idle person England could then support itself, and is a stain on Religion for the land to be waste and yet many to starve

Cromwell argued that, with the times as they were, the things that the Diggers wanted were impossible

How do we know if, whilst we are disputing these things, another company of men shall gather together and they shall put out a paper as plausible perhaps as this? And not only another and another, but many of this kind And if so, what do you think the consequence would be? Would it not be confusion? Would it not be utter confusion?

Finally, Cromwell stopped arguing and sent a troop of horse to the common where the Diggers had begun to work, took their tools, dispersed their followers and clapped the leaders into the Tower It had not been for the sake of the mass of the people that the power of the King had been destroyed

V

Cromwell
and his section
of 'The
New Model'

It was clear to Cromwell, and those of the Army who shared his ideas, that what was left of the Long Parliament might very easily make a mess of the victory, and was in fact going near to make a great many people feel that they had better have stuck to Charles

A section of the Army decided to act on their own Cromwell seems at first to have been reluctant to lead them, but the most powerful group in the Army (which now elected representatives to speak for them) sent him word that 'If he would not forthwith come and lead them they would go their own way without him'

It is always a serious thing for a general to take the law into his own hands and get rid of the legal government But, as Cromwell knew, the Parliament that was

now sitting was by no means the body that had been elected in 1640, after Pym and Hampden's celebrated riding tour. In 1648 it had been 'purged'. That is to say, Colonel Pryde—sent by the Army to whom the Parliament owed arrears of pay—had stood at the door and turned away a hundred of the members that the Army disliked. Those who were left (only ninety) were nicknamed 'The Rump' or sitting part.



CROMWELL EXPELLING THE 'RUMP'

He is third from the left—notice his hat and boots

The Army now found that this Rump proposed to dissolve and elect a fresh Parliament in quite a new way. They were all ninety of them to belong to it and were to have the power of keeping out any elected members of whom they did not approve. The rule of the Rump had latterly been unpopular for one reason or another with most of the people who were taking an active part in politics. The Cavaliers, whose estates were being fined away, disliked it, the 'Independents' in religion disliked it, the poor people would not stand up for it and it was at daggers drawn with the New Model

The Rump
Parliament

1653
Cromwell
turns out the
Rump
No one stood
up for them

Army So one day Cromwell marched down to Westminster, much as the King had done, with armed men at his back. He lectured the members on their shortcomings, fetched the Speaker down from his chair, dissolved Parliament by taking away the mace (a sort of staff or sceptre which to this day lies on the Speaker's table when Parliament sits), turned out the members and locked the doors. This time nobody protested. The London citizens, who had once protected Parliament, were as sick of them as people in the rest of the country.

VI

Oliver
Cromwell,
1599-1658

What sort of a man was this Cromwell? He came from Huntingdon, and was one of the squires who long ago had been fined by Charles I for having neglected to become a knight. He had sat in the Long Parliament with Pym and Hampden. He had turned himself into a successful cavalry leader. He had argued with Lord Manchester, organized the New Model Army, and become an extremely successful general. He had behaved atrociously in Ireland, argued with the Levellers, and then made short work of the poor man's party. Such was his history. But there is a good deal more to be said about him. Oliver Cromwell was genuinely religious, and more tolerant of other people's religion than most squires of his time, he was well educated and though, like most Puritans, serious, he was fond of music and pictures. Two of his secretaries were poets—Andrew Marvell and the great John Milton. Like many people who have had a great deal of military experience, he was more apt to consider whether a thing could be done than whether it was a good thing to do it. He was honest, served his party unselfishly, and was not conceited.

VII

The Army was not so foolish as to suggest that Cromwell should be a regular 'dictator', nor would Cromwell have

been so foolish as to accept the job. A rather irregularly elected Parliament met and asked him to accept the title of 'Lord Protector'. England was then for the next five years to all intents under his personal rule.

The 'Lord Protector',
1653

His task was difficult. Some foreign countries, for instance, refused to recognize the new government so did Scotland, Ireland and half the colonies in America. Russia expelled all Englishmen because of the execution of Charles. Cromwell's ambassador to Holland was murdered by exiled Cavaliers, and at the French Court there was the prince who claimed that he was the rightful ruler of England.

But Cromwell's enemies were divided among themselves. So in England many people who did not greatly care for his semi-military government, were yet willing to put up with it as at least better than a new civil war.

Cromwell's
enemies were
divided

One thing in particular made people willing to agree to Cromwell's rule. There was less religious persecution than there had ever been before. He certainly discouraged Catholics and members of the Church of England, but even to them he was not harsh. Baptists, Presbyterians, Independents—the three main Puritan sects—might all flourish, and besides them, innumerable smaller religious societies. 'I had rather,' he said, 'that Mahomedanism were permitted among us than that one of God's children should be persecuted.' The most interesting of these sects was one which calls itself 'The Society of Friends of the Truth' and is generally called by other people 'The Quakers'.

Religious
toleration

The Society
of Friends

The Quakers had no clergy and no special services, but believed in guidance from an 'inner light'. Though they were above all against the use of force, they had a startling way of preaching and talking. A church they would call 'The Steeple House' and sometimes a Quaker would walk, hat on head, into the middle of a service and rebuke parson and people for their heathen way of worship.

The Puritans
disapprove of
theatres and
dancing

All the Puritans agreed that theatres and dancing round Maypoles, or on the green, were wrong. We might agree that it was a good thing to stop such sports as bull, bear and badger baiting, and such customs as duelling, but to most of us it seems that the Puritans were too strict.

Though at first, when he was harassed by wars abroad, (first against Holland and then against Spain) Cromwell ruled the country as if it had been a troop of horse', when things grew quieter his methods became less military, and after four years a new Parliament met. They offered to make Cromwell King. One member gave as his reason for wishing for this that then Cromwell's powers would be bounded 'like an acre of land'. Cromwell refused the crown.

VIII

Death of
Cromwell,
1658

In the September of 1658, in his fifty-ninth year, Cromwell died. The problem of how England was to be ruled had not been solved, and it had been possible for him to give the country peace only because he was an unusual person. For, whatever his faults, Oliver Cromwell was a great man.

'Tumble-
down Dick'

For the next year and a half the question of how England was to be governed became most urgent and various plans were tried. The first and most ridiculous was that of making Oliver's son, Richard Cromwell, Protector—just as if Oliver had accepted the crown instead of refusing it. Richard was 'gentle and virtuous', but not the stuff of which Lords Protector must be made. He resigned.

The army recalled what was left of the Rump. The Rump proposed new laws which the army would not have.

General
Monk

General Lambert, and General Monk, both professed to want to call a new freely elected Parliament, but each had different ideas of how to set about it. General Monk had for some time been in communication with

Prince Charles, and when the new Parliament was being elected all sorts of rumours went about

Ding a ding ding, I heard a bird sing,
The Parliament soldiers are gone to the King

In the end a Parliament was returned in which there was a majority in favour of recalling Charles from France, ^{Prince} Charles and making him what his friends had long called him— ^{Charles} invited back
King Charles II of England

CHAPTER 36

RESTORATION, WITH A DIFFERENCE (1660 TO 1674)

King by
invitation of
the
Commons

SOME historians write as if the new King, who was received with great enthusiasm, had been restored to all that his father had lost. Charles himself, who had lived a hard life and who was exceedingly shrewd, knew better. When he was proclaimed king he was certainly called 'King by the Grace of God', just as his father had been, but in this case God had chosen to act through Parliament. Charles II was King of England by invitation of the House of Commons. The laws that the Long Parliament had passed to limit the power of the Crown were not repealed. It was all very polite! For instance, it was agreed that 'The King can do no wrong' (as it is to-day), so his subjects took care to urge him always to act through some minister or other, who could take the blame if things went wrong. A courtier friend pinned on his bedroom door these lines

Here lies our Sovereign Lord the King,
Whose word no man relies on
He never said a foolish thing,
And never did a wise one

'Quite true,' said the King. 'For my words are my own, but my acts are my ministers.'

When the middle classes had decided to return to a system of government with a king at its head, they invited Charles because he was the son of his father and kings should be succeeded by their eldest sons

But had they been able to choose from the whole world they would have found it difficult to find a man who seemed more willing to fit in with their plans. He was above all determined never to 'go on his travels again', and would do nothing, to risk his throne. Just the man they wanted!

Lord Halifax, who knew him for many years, says that he knew very well how to hide his feelings, kept his own secrets, loved witty talk, but cared for ease more than for anything else in the world.

If a hard thing were done to another man, he did not eat his supper the worse for it. He would rather be eclipsed than troubled. His Ministers were to administer business to him as doctors do physic wrap it up in something to make it less unpleasant.

But Charles had not been on the throne long before he found there was disagreeable work that not even he could altogether shirk.



Charles' character

PORTRAIT OF CHARLES II CARVED IN WOOD BY AN ENGLISH ARTIST
Wood carving was very fashionable

II

For instance, the Church of England party were not content merely to be free to worship as they liked. Charles himself did not bother much about religion—

Laws against
Nonconformists

he was a Catholic if he was anything—and preferred that other people should also be let alone. But his Church of England followers had suffered from the Presbyterians and Independents (that is the Puritans), now they intended to get their revenge. Not merely did the former Church of England parsons get back their livings (which was reasonable enough), but Parliament also passed a number of laws to punish those who refused to conform. The old form of Prayer Book and Service were restored without any concessions being made to those who disagreed with them. Only members of the Church of England were allowed to be mayors and aldermen. No nonconformist minister might live within five miles of a town or of any places where he had been a minister, those who went to nonconformist services were punished.

Many people, of course, at once changed back to their old ways of worship and did not suffer. But quite a number refused and suffered, in 1662 there were 1,300 Quakers in prison and some of them never came out alive.

John
Bunyan,
1628-1688

Among those who suffered was a poor preacher named John Bunyan, who had at one time been a tinker. In his prison in Bedford he began to write a sermon which he meant to smuggle out to some of his followers. At one point in the sermon he wrote how the life of a man is like a journey or a pilgrimage. Then, as he sat alone in his cell, the idea grew and he found he had written not a sermon but a wonderful tale, with a moral, certainly, but also with giants and strange adventures in it. He called it 'The Pilgrim's Progress' and it became one of the best-loved and most celebrated books ever written in the English language.

John Milton,
1608-1674

Another Puritan writer must always be remembered. This was the great poet, John Milton. He had been Cromwell's secretary and though he was not imprisoned, he was now poor and blind. In the grand, rolling and solemn lines of 'Paradise Lost', he tells of the terrible

'Paradise
Lost'

war between Satan and the armies of heaven, how when Satan was beaten he planned revenge, how Adam and Eve in Eden were tempted by him, lost their innocence, and were driven out of the Garden of Eden. Many boys and girls who may, alas, already have been bored by 'Lycidas' (one of Milton's shorter poems), would enjoy the excellent war conference held by the fiends in 'Pandemonium' or the beauty of the trees and streams of Eden.

III

Readers of the second volume of this history may remember how a terrible sickness, 'the Black Death', or bubonic plague, first reached England from the East and in 1349 killed off nearly one-third of the population. Both James I and Charles I saw many of their subjects die of this disease, particularly in London.

In 1665, after a long drought, there was a terrible outbreak in London. King, courtiers, merchants, tradesmen fled into the country, business came to a standstill, and about 100,000 citizens died (nearly a quarter of the city population). As if the city had not suffered enough, in 1666 there was a fire so terrible that nearly 13,000 houses were burnt. The fire no doubt helped to clear away the plague, but it meant a loss of something like ten million pounds and left many people homeless.

By good luck, however, it happened that one of the members of the Royal Society (of which more in the next chapter) was the best architect that England has ever produced. This man was Christopher Wren.

London had been a huddle of a city, with little narrow streets overhung by the upper storeys of the houses. Wren made plans to lay out afresh the whole of the part that had been burnt and to rebuild it in the new 'classic' style of architecture (see the picture on page 100). There were to be new quays by the river, and new wide streets would make it possible for coaches and drays to pass quickly about their business. But though the ground

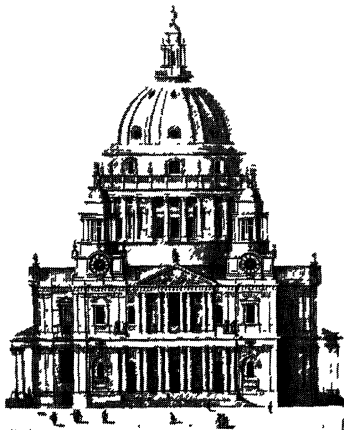
The Great
Plague, 1665

The Fire of
London,
1666

Sir Christo-
pher Wren,
1632-1723

Wren plans a
new London

had been cleared, the heads of the citizens had not. Each citizen wanted his new shop exactly where the old one had stood, the streets must run as they had always run, even if the coaches must creep. However, fortu-



A WORKING DRAWING BY WREN FOR THE NEW
ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

But is not allowed to build it nately for us, Wren was at least allowed to rebuild a number of churches, and they and St Paul's Cathedral still stand to show what a great architect he was. Later he designed two homes for old soldiers and old sailors—

Chelsea and Greenwich Hospitals These are still among the most beautiful buildings in England

IV

There was war, as well as plague and fire From the beginning of the seventeenth century the English and the Dutch had been rivals in trade The merchants of each nation had been settling colonies in America, and establishing 'factories' in the Far East (see Chapter 32) Quite early, however, the Dutch had shown themselves the cleverer traders Their ships, too, were the more efficient and won a larger and larger share of the world's carrying trade The English were shut out of the Spice Islands, and so had to buy their spices at Amsterdam as, long before, they had bought them at Antwerp Dutch banking, too, was much better than English

The Dutch

In all sorts of ways the English tried to imitate the Dutch, and Dutch workmen were employed in ship-building, land-draining, and brick-making Dutch methods were used, too, in glass-blowing, printing, and weaving But in spite of all this imitation the Dutch kept their lead

Beaten in business, the English merchants began to demand help from the government Both Cromwell and Charles passed laws saying that English goods must be carried in English ships, and both Cromwell (in 1652-1654) and Charles (in 1664-1667 and 1672-1674) went to war with the Dutch England won the Dutch colonies of New Jersey and New York in America Thus for the first time England began to build up an empire by fighting, instead of by peaceful settlement

Dutch Wars,
1652, 1664,
1672

All these things—religious persecution, war, plague and fire—haunted the early years of Charles' reign Many people lost their lives, and yet the time between 1660 and 1680 is one of the greatest in English history

One of the
greatest
periods in
English
History
Why?

Some people, when they think of the reign of Charles II, think of how witty and frivolous the Court was and how bold and amusing the playwrights and poets were.

But such wit, such verse, and such plays, can be matched in many other times and places. The wonderful advances that were made in science are what make the England of that day live in the history of the world.

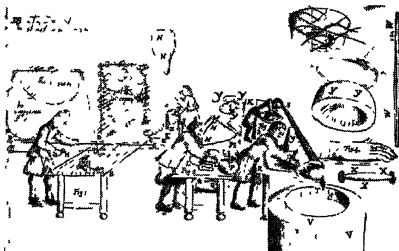
CHAPTER 37

THE AGE OF NEWTON

To understand this sudden flowering of science, the reader must be given an idea of what had been happening in other countries, and what in England were the practical problems that were cropping up in the business of the great middle class that had won the civil war. For it always seems as if men of science either knowingly, or without noticing, try to solve the problems of their day. Starting from the work of earlier scientists—they take up work that has some bearing on what is 'in the air'—they study the problems that whatever class is uppermost at the time is thinking and talking about and would most like to see solved. Of course it can also be said that in each age scientists go on with the work of scientists who have gone before. This is quite true. What the scientist learns from those who have gone before is the seed—the soil is the need of the particular age in which each scientist lives. The soil in which science flourished

Two sorts of need were felt by the men who had won the war. First they wanted to develop trade and manufacture. The other need had to do with fighting. On land the weapon that decided war was now the cannon. At sea it was again the cannon, and also the possession of warships that were seaworthy and could be easily handled.

Merchants wanted better transport. The roads were exceedingly bad. Heavy goods travelled overland in heavy carts—and travelled very slowly. Pack-horses went Transport



FELT HAT MAKERS AT WORK

NOTES BY HOOKE EXPLAINING HIS DRAWING OF FELT HAT MAKING [Royal Society]

- ABCD A Table board slit into a great many little or oblong pieces, with sufficient slit for the dust to fall away
- DLFG The Bow DE—a stick of Linn about 6 or 8 foot long having it each end a wooden bridge for about a foot deep This bow is suspended at a convenient height so that the string may have sufficient room to play and that there may be a good heap of carded wool between the hurdle and it
- H Their bowstick A small turned stick with a Button at each end holding this in their right hand with the Button they take hold of the String and stretch it and let it go very nimbly thereby saving their fingers and applying the strength of the whole hand
- K Basoning tables
- L Their Basons round plates of iron 18 or 20 inches Diameter So lect into the Board that their open surface lies even with it, and the under side open to
- OO a pan of Chucole set under each of them
- MM Their Basoning Cloth
- NNNN The Inlayer, a piece of coarse canvas shaped triangular
- P An earthen pott to contain cold water and a brush to sprinkle with
- RS A waking plank placed shalving for any liquor to dryne away as fast as it is prest out of the Felt, and running into
- T Fig 3 A small gutter at the bottom It is carried into
- VV The Boyling Furnace, placed at the end of it, out of which they take out again the boyling liquor with a pott and throw it on the Felt
- WW Their Wake-pin
- XX Stamping Iron
- YYYY Their blocks shaped of the fashion so each they intend the crown shall bee
- Z Their block which they call a fryer on which they mould their hats

Voyages

a little faster, but a pack-horse could carry very little But, as England is an island, what the English merchants wanted above all was safer ships and quicker voyages.

Now when ships crossed the two great oceans, the rough-and-ready calculations of the earlier voyages—

their ways of steering by the sun and stars—were found to have errors in them which made a serious practical difference when it was a question of long distances, and the early compasses gave only a rough idea of direction. A captain who trusted to the old methods on a very long voyage might find himself hundreds of miles from where he wanted to be. (The reader will remember, for instance, what happened to the *Mayflower*.) There were all sorts of ocean currents. So one of the things that was most needed was that a ship should be able to 'establish her position' at any time. her navigator 'Where am I?' needed to know where she was in the open ocean, whether she had been blown out of her course, or carried out of it by a current and if so how far in the wrong direction she had travelled. Only when he did know, could he set a new correct course.

Then there were questions about the designing of the ships themselves. Up to a certain size larger ships are faster than small ones and, if properly designed, safer, besides being able to carry more cargo. But a big ship must be built much more strongly just to enlarge the old design will not do, and the bigger ship will almost certainly need some change in her sail plan. Again the bigger ship will generally have a deeper keel, and the more necessary it will be for her captain to know the times of the tides if he is to get into the harbours and channels that he wants. Shipbuilding

All these practical problems of navigation and design were really problems of astronomy and hydrostatics.

II

Industry, too, had new problems. As the reader has seen, the rise in prices that had been going on for the last hundred and fifty years was due to the great quantities of fresh silver that were being mined in the New World, and in Germany. Another thing that made mining important was the fact that what generally decided which side would win in a war was which side had most cannon. Industry Mining

Great quantities were used. In one year, for instance, Cromwell ordered 1,835 new cannon, 117,000 cannon-balls and 5,000 hand grenades. All these were made of iron, and though iron does not, as a rule, lie as deep as coal, yet in many places it has to be brought up from under the earth. To bring up the iron ore or the silver in baskets on men's backs was very slow, so the problem of how best to use pulleys, windlasses, and winding gear became interesting. When the ore was up to the surface, too, there was the question of crushing it. It was possible to do this by hand, just as it is possible to grind grain in a little stone quern, but when so much iron was wanted, some kind of big heavy grinder was really needed. Water- and wind-mills had long been used for grinding corn, could they be used to crush ore? Again, mines tended to fill with water, but in Holland wind-mills were used for pumping, could this method, or perhaps a better one, be used for the tin mines of Cornwall?

Smelting. In the Middle Ages charcoal made from wood had always been used to produce a fierce heat. Now coal was being used instead of charcoal for such things as burning bricks, boiling soap, making glass, nails and knives and for casting brass. But more and more wood was being used up in building houses and for making the new large ships, so people began to experiment with using coal and coke for as many purposes as possible. Raising more coal meant mining problems again. The coal workings of England produced about 2½ million tons in 1660. In Durham and Cumberland there were hundreds of acres of land which were dotted with small pit shafts—often connected underground and lined with truck-ways—and most of these little pits had to have the water drained or pumped out of them.

Cromwell's
big order for
cannon, 1652

How was iron
ore to be got
up?

Crushing

Smelting

Coal mining
in 1660

Charcoal and lime burners, and smiths with their bellows, had long known how to get a fiercer heat by using a forced draught of air. Now when such quantities of metal had to be smelted, such ideas began to be applied to designing regular blast furnaces.

The use of cannon and hand guns in war brought up other problems. For instance, a cannon- or musket-ball does not fly straight through the air. If it is to hit something a long way off, even if that something is on its own level, the gunners knew that it must be fired up into the air. Why? Again, what exactly happened when the gunpowder exploded inside the cannon or the musket? Here were two puzzles that interested the scientists.

The path of a
cannon-ball
through the
air

III

Such questions kept coming up in the England of Charles II's reign. They had already been studied in Italy and Holland. The reader may remember such names as those of Copernicus, Michael Angelo and Leonardo da Vinci.

Galileo, another Italian, came later. One of the things that he studied was how falling bodies behave. For instance, by throwing a light weight and a heavy one both together from the top of the Leaning Tower of Pisa he proved to anybody who cared to look (the University professors wouldn't) that Aristotle had been wrong in saying that a heavier weight would always reach the ground before a lighter one. Galileo also made for himself what he called an 'optic glass' (What we should call a telescope). With its help he observed facts which made it certain that Copernicus, and his own contemporary Kepler, were right in thinking that it was the earth that moved round the sun and not the sun round the earth.

Galileo,
1564-1642

The earth
moves

Another thing that Galileo saw—not with his telescope but with his mind—was that if new discoveries were to be made, scientists must be as exact as possible. Now it is much easier to be correct about counting, measuring and weighing than about such things as smelling, tasting or hearing. From that time scientists considered number, size and weight the most important things to be observed.

In the year in which Galileo died—1642—there was born in a small farmhouse in Lincolnshire the man who

Isaac
Newton,
1642-1727

A group of
famous men

was destined to carry on his work Isaac Newton grew up in an age and a country where the problems which Galileo had studied were of the greatest practical interest, and he went on with Galileo's work—not of course alone There were a number of other people who were deeply interested in the same sort of problems There were, for instance, Boyle, Hooke, Halley and Wren

Now like other scientists who were working, or had worked, on the Continent, Newton and the rest found



SIR ISAAC NEWTON

Scientific
Societies

This is drawn from a small ivory bust belonging to the Royal Society that the Universities were not always the best places for their work The most progressive scientists of the day were intent on experiment, wanted to be in touch with practical people, and needed a new kind of scientific society So in 1645 they founded in England what they called 'The Invisible College' Just such societies were being started in other countries They were all founded by men who were tired of being told that what they had seen for themselves could not be true because it contradicted either Aristotle or the decision of a meeting of Cardinals

Newton wrote a letter to a student who was going on a tour round Europe which shows how important he thought practical things. Newton advised this young man to study the steering and navigation of ships, the natural riches of each country that he visited, how the minerals were got out of the ground, and how they were treated afterwards. In Holland he should go and see a new factory for polishing glass and find out how the Dutch protected their vessels from rot on their voyages to India.

Newton
writes to a
student, 1669

A factory
for polishing
glass

Charles II took a strong personal interest in the work of the 'Invisible College' and gave the Society help and a new name—'The Royal Society'. To this day 'F R S'—Fellow of the Royal Society—is the proudest title that an English scientist can have. Many of the first Fellows gained world-wide fame. There was Robert Boyle who studied the behaviour of gases—including the air—and who was absurdly described in his epitaph as, 'Father of Chemistry and Uncle of the Earl of Cork'. There was Wren who began as a scientist and became the best of English architects. There was Halley, the astronomer, who made voyages to observe the action of ocean tides and of winds such as the monsoon, and to examine the stars of the Southern hemisphere. Halley, too, proved that the height of a mountain can be measured by the lessened pressure of the atmosphere on a barometer. There was Robert Hooke who helped Boyle with his famous air pump, and worked on the variations of the compass. Look at Hooke's picture of felt hat makers (page 104). It has never been printed before, and is another proof of how interested the scientists were in every-day work.

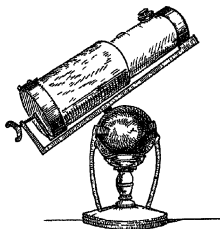
The Royal
Society

The first
'Fellows'

Isaac Newton was the greatest of them all. What was so specially valuable about his work was that like Aristotle (the great Greek whose work was spoken of in Volume I), he not only made most important discoveries himself, but gathered together practically all that was then known about his particular branches of science. By means of new ways of doing mathematics, Newton

What
Newton did
for Science

showed the general principles that lay behind what was 'Principia' known. His great book is called 'Principia,' which means 'principles.' It gives facts about the behaviour of moving bodies and shows that they will move in a particular way, whether they are planets, the pendulums of clocks or falling weights. It gives facts about the behaviour of beams of light and shows that these beams will behave in the same way whether they are shed by a candle or by the most distant star, while it shows that



ONE OF NEWTON'S FIRST TELESCOPES MADE BY HIM IN 1671

The base is of polished wood

this same star—huge and remote—is controlled by the same force that makes an apple drop from a tree or the tide ebb in Dover harbour. So correct were the things that Newton told the world about the general laws of motion that when, in the course of the next two hundred years, much more powerful microscopes and telescopes were made, and many new facts discovered, it was found that almost all that Newton had said was also true of facts of whose existence he could only guess. Newton died in 1727 and the poet Pope wrote his epitaph

Nature and Nature's laws lay hid in night
God said, Let Newton be, and all was light

CHAPTER 38

PARLIAMENT MAKES ANOTHER CHANGE

(1672 TO 1694)

By the end of Charles II's reign the power of the King Late years was definitely greater than Parliament had meant it to Charles II be. All the laws that the Long Parliament had passed were still in force, and yet, as the years passed, it became clear that, by little and little, ease-loving Charles had found ways of getting round the laws by which he was supposed to be tied. For instance, in foreign affairs Foreign Charles managed to get his own way in an alarming affairs fashion. After the Dutch war was over Charles and his Parliaments had quite different ideas as to what was to be done. Parliament became more and more anti-French. This was because the French were becoming France dangerous competitors in the work of building up an becomes the empire in America and India, and it seemed as though rival France would become another Spain. So Parliament disliked the French much more than they had ever disliked the Dutch. The Catholic French government hoped to see the spread of Catholicism in England again. Now the Protestant middle classes of England had long believed that there were three things that went together: the Catholic religion, the arbitrary power of kings, and poverty for themselves. They therefore hated what they called 'Popery and wooden shoes'. They felt 'Popery and wooden shoes' most uneasy because France was becoming more and shoes' more powerful under her famous King, Louis XIV, who Louis XIV

was served by a succession of brilliantly clever ministers. The French government from time to time secretly sent Charles large supplies of money. In return for this money, which helped to keep him independent of Parliament, Charles managed, in spite of the strong anti-French feeling in England, to keep England in alliance with France.

II

Politics at home At home things went on rather in the same way. A king could not now pass laws without the consent of Parliament. But if, with the help of the secret supplies from France, a king could avoid calling Parliament, he could at any rate make sure that there should be no new laws that he did not like. Besides there were, Charles found, ways of seeing that laws (such as those against Catholics) were not really enforced. His plan was to dismiss judges who opposed him, and to put his own supporters in their places. To counter the efforts of the King, Parliament passed laws which emphasized the rights of his subjects.

Charles gets round the laws

The most important of these was the famous 'Habeas Corpus' Act. Since before the time of Magna Carta it had been a principle of English law that no one ought to be kept in prison unless he had been tried and found guilty of a definite crime. But actually English kings, like French kings, had often found it convenient to put people out of sight, and highly inconvenient to have brought out at a public trial why they had done so. Under the Act of 1679 the law was very much strengthened and anyone who had been imprisoned could demand 'a writ of Habeas Corpus'—that is an order from the judges that the 'body of the prisoner' should be produced, and that there should be a prompt trial. This law is still in force.

Habeas Corpus Act, 1679

Charles' next move was a very clever one, and was aimed against Parliament itself. With the help of his new judges he made London, and over sixty other towns,

surrender their Charters on the grounds that at some time or other they had been used illegally. This was so useful because the towns, not the counties, sent to Parliament the members who were most energetic in the struggle against the royal power. In the new Charters which he gave to the towns Charles managed things in such a way that his own supporters would be sent to Parliament.

Town
Charters,
1683

III

But Charles was the sort of man who is careful never to push things too far. He was too lazy and too cautious and too determined not to 'go on his travels again'. If Parliament was really angry and determined, Charles always gave way. For instance, in 1672 he had issued a 'Declaration of Indulgence' which suspended the laws both against Catholics and the more extreme Nonconformists. But when Parliament met he found he had gone too far. So, with his consent, Parliament passed a

Declaration
of Indul-
gence, 1672

Test Act which made the laws against the Catholics even stricter. It was now illegal for them to be officers in the army or navy or to hold government posts. The feeling against Catholics was extraordinarily strong. For

Test Act

instance, a certain swindler named Titus Oates came before a London magistrate and declared that he knew

Titus Oates,
1678

of a 'Popish Plot' to bring over a French army, murder the King, and set up his Catholic brother James in his place. Everyone believed this story. Protestants went about armed with flails, and Catholics were tried and executed on the flimsiest evidence—particularly after the magistrate to whom the tale was first told was found murdered.

Panic about a
Popish Plot

The thing that most alarmed the Protestants was the fact that, because Charles had no legitimate children, the heir to the throne was his Catholic brother James. In the panic caused by the supposed discovery of the 'Popish Plot', Parliament brought in a Bill excluding James from the succession. It was suggested that Charles

We won't
have James!

should be succeeded instead by his handsome and popular illegitimate son, whom he had made Duke of Monmouth

However, Charles lived on for seven years after these excitements, and by that time Titus Oates had been proved to have been a liar, feeling against the Catholics had died down, Monmouth had been banished, and many people felt ashamed of having believed all that Titus Oates had pretended to reveal

IV

James II, 1685 So James II, Catholic though he was, succeeded almost without opposition, and if he had been like his brother, he might have kept his throne. But James was a stupid, energetic man, instead of a lazy, clever one. A contemporary said that Charles 'could see things if he would', while James 'would see things if he could'. James could not see that the middle class, through Parliament, had restored the Crown, but had destroyed the divine right of kings.

Monmouth's rebellion The first danger that James II had to face was a rising in the West, led by the Duke of Monmouth. This rebellion was supported by another in Scotland. Monmouth was defeated and beheaded, and Chief Justice Jeffreys was sent down to the West to try the survivors. So severe was he that his visit became famous as 'The Bloody Assize'. Jeffreys had 300 people hanged, while 800 more unfortunate men were given as presents to various courtiers, who sold them into slavery on the West Indian sugar plantations.

The Rebellion makes a good excuse The rebellion made a good excuse for the building of a big standing army, and this James—determined to establish the power of the Crown—proceeded to do. He recruited his army largely from Irish Catholics, and every summer it was stationed on Hounslow Heath as a special warning to the London citizens. London was far the largest and most important town in England, and had never been royalist. James was a sincere Catholic, and like Charles he often 'dispensed' with the laws

against individual Catholics, and would appoint this man or that to be an army officer, a minister of state, or professor. Soon he claimed that he had power to suspend laws altogether, and issued a new declaration of indulgence both to the Nonconformists and Catholics.

James tries to make things easier for the Catholics

People consoled themselves with the thought that, as James had no son, when he died he would be succeeded by his daughter Mary who had married that staunch Protestant, William of Orange, who was the ruler and chief general of the Dutch.

However, this won't last for ever!

Therefore when, in the July of 1688, a son was born to James's queen, his leading Protestant subjects were filled with dismay. If this child were brought up as a Catholic (as he almost certainly would be) it was no longer any use putting up with James. There was so much feeling that the arrival of the child was a disaster that a rumour got about that he was not really the Queen's child at all, but had been smuggled into her room in a warming-pan. But a group of the leading Protestant gentry did something more practical than spread rumours. A letter was secretly sent to William of Orange, asking him to bring an army to England. This army was to stand by till a new Parliament could be called and to make sure that it was freely elected. William had to consider this carefully, for he knew that it was a risk that he was being asked to take. The French might attack Holland while he was away! Again, suppose fighting broke out when his army landed in England, might not the fact that his soldiers were foreigners annoy a great many people even more than James's unpopular actions had done?

Then an heir is born to James, 1688

The Protestant gentry ask William to land with an army

However, William agreed to try the venture. Luckily the French army, instead of attacking Holland, went off to fight in Germany. Contrary winds held up an English fleet with which James had meant to stop him, and William landed at Torbay. James did not attack him on land, and many of those who had been his supporters left him and joined William. James was beaten without

William has luck on his side

a fight His last act before he fled the country in disguise was to drop the Great Seal—necessary for important State documents, such as those appointing the chief ministers—into the Thames He hoped like this at least to make things awkward for his daughter and son-in-law

A new Parliament was at once called, and after much discussion they declared William and Mary joint King and Queen The next year Acts were passed which made it illegal for the sovereign to keep up a standing army in times of peace, or to suspend laws, or dispense with them as James and Charles had done Parliament was to meet regularly and no single Parliament might last more than three years Not only was it to be illegal henceforth for a king or queen to levy taxes, but Parliament was to have the right to say exactly what the money it voted was to be spent on

The Bill of
Rights, 1689

Triennial
Act, 1694

Act of
Settlement

Finally, by the Act of Settlement, it was made illegal for a Catholic to succeed to the Crown of England This Act also made it against the law for a king to dismiss judges or to buy the support of members of Parliament by giving them jobs—‘posts of profit under the Crown’

So, when the new century began, the right of Parliament to control the Government of England had been firmly established

In the next chapter we shall try to show the reader what sort of a country it was over which Parliament ruled

POINTS TO BE NOTICED IN PART II

(1603 TO 1700)

1 In the reign of James I, the Scottish King who succeeded Elizabeth, a struggle began between the King and the Puritan middle class James wanted a Spanish alliance abroad and absolute monarchy at home

2 English colonies had already been founded in America, but had been unsuccessful Now they began to flourish

PARLIAMENT MAKES ANOTHER CHANGE 117

Many colonists went abroad to make a living, but some because their religion was unpopular in the country from which they came

3 At home King and Parliament became more and more hostile Under Charles I civil war broke out

4 After six years of fighting the King and his party were defeated, the Long Parliament failed to establish stable government, and Oliver Cromwell, one of the Parliamentary generals, became Lord Protector

5 At his death it was decided that there should be a King again Charles II was brought back from exile but with powers very much restricted

6 Charles II's reign is chiefly notable for great men of science and for a great architect

7 France was growing in importance and now there seemed a chance that she might become as powerful as Spain at the time of the Armada Parliament would have liked an alliance with Holland, but Charles managed to prevent this and continued an alliance with France

8 James II went on with Charles's policy, but more energetically and less tactfully, and displeased the middle class so much that they invited his daughter and son-in-law, William and Mary, to be King and Queen James fled, and his daughter and her husband succeeded him

9 As for Part I, the chief sources are the records of the Government, the reports of speeches in Parliament, the private letters of various people and the plays and poems of the time In addition, for this period we have a great number of pamphlets and a few early newspapers, the diaries of men like Pepys and Evelyn, and the records of the Royal Society

PART III

CHAPTER 39

THE ENGLAND THAT THE SQUIRES AND MERCHANTS RULED

(ABOUT 1700)

JUST as every now and then it happens that quadruplets or even quintuplets are born, every now and then someone lives far beyond the usual age. In the reign of Charles I, for instance, a countryman whom everyone called 'Old Parr' was found to have reached the age of a hundred and fifty-two years. He had been a young man when Henry VIII came to the throne, over ninety years old when the Armada sailed down the Channel, had lived all through the reign of James I, and had seen the beginning of the quarrels which ended in the victory of Parliament. William Harvey, the great doctor of Charles' time, said that if he had not been brought out of his village to be shown at court he might have lived still longer.

A great deal has been said in this volume about what had happened since the time of Henry VIII. We have described some of the changes in the ideas of learned men and political changes of all sorts. Supposing Old Parr, who was a simple old countryman, had lived on to the time of William and Mary, what changes would he have noticed? The fashions in the richer people's clothes had changed several times and the style of building for big

If Old Parr
had lived on
to the time of
William and
Mary?

Cottages still
the same

houses, town halls and churches was different (see pictures on pages 14, 15 and 100), but for the poorer people cottages were built in much the same way. Their clothes had changed less quickly and they ate much the same sort of food. The population was larger, but there were still only five and a half million people in the whole country, and most of these lived in villages and tilled the ground for a living, very much as they had always done. The newer villages had wider streets, and in every village



NEW HOUSES IN THE VILLAGE

there would be one or two new square brick houses with big sash windows often with young lime trees planted in front of them in the Dutch fashion (look at the picture on this page). There were many new ideas and many new inventions, but they had not yet spread enough to make much difference to most people's habits or to the general look of things.

Still no
winter feed
for stock

The greatest difficulty that the farmer had to face was still that of how to feed his stock through the winter. Many beasts were still killed in September and the meat salted down as it had been when Old Parr was a boy.

Abroad, farmers were beginning to grow roots for winter feed, but here the idea had not spread much. There was still little or no fresh butter, meat or fresh vegetables to be had all winter. Potatoes were not generally used.

One change had gradually come about that a simple fellow like Old Parr might or might not have noticed.

Certain parts of the country and certain towns specialized more than they had in his young days in the making of certain goods. More brass-working was done in Birmingham than in other towns; a great many knives were made in Sheffield. In the country round Leicester, glass and stockings were made for sale. Round London, which now had half a million inhabitants, and was the only really large town in the kingdom, lived dairymen and market gardeners who kept cows, pigs, poultry, and vegetables to sell to the citizens.

Towns begin to specialize and more goods are made for sale

Richer people had very good ways of cooking their food. A recipe book called 'The Gentlewoman's Delight' speaks of chicken pies made with prunes, of sucking-pigs stuffed with spiced forcemeat and of 'delicious custards' made with sugar, fruit and cream, and of ways of candying fruit and flower petals. The poorer people's diet was still very monotonous, even when they had enough to eat. For instance, the poor children in Exeter workhouse were probably fed very much on the same things as the people outside. A list of what they ate exists. They had beer,¹ bread and cheese for supper every night of the week and beer was served at dinner, too. On Sunday they had beef for dinner with 'garden stuff'. On Monday, pease pudding, on Tuesday baked pudding with or without fruit, on Wednesday buttered carrots, turnips, or parsnips, on Friday beef and garden stuff, and on Saturday a plain suet dumpling each. Breakfast was always either gruel, broth, or bread and cheese and beer. They seem to have had no sweet things at all and very little butter. Probably children who lived on farms would get milk in the summer, but sugar

Food of Rich people

Bread and pease pudding

¹ The beer was not nearly as strong as what is drunk now

was expensive, and even the richest people had only just begun to drink tea, coffee and cocoa

More than half the things that a poor family would use or eat were made or grown in the villages in which they lived, but the things that were made for sale in any particular neighbourhood had to be collected by merchants or chapmen, or to be taken to the fairs to be exchanged

Ships Many small coasting vessels sailed regularly from port to port round the coasts, and quantities of goods were regularly carried in this way just as they are on the west coast of Scotland to-day Inland, moving goods was more difficult, for, as trade increased, people began to use wagons as well as strings of pack-horses, and the earth roads were

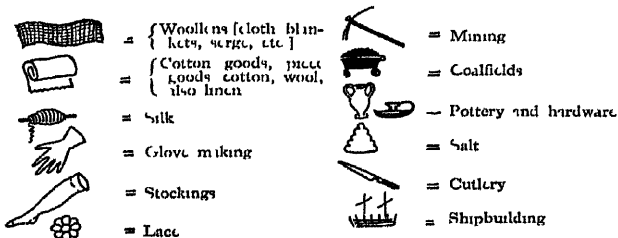
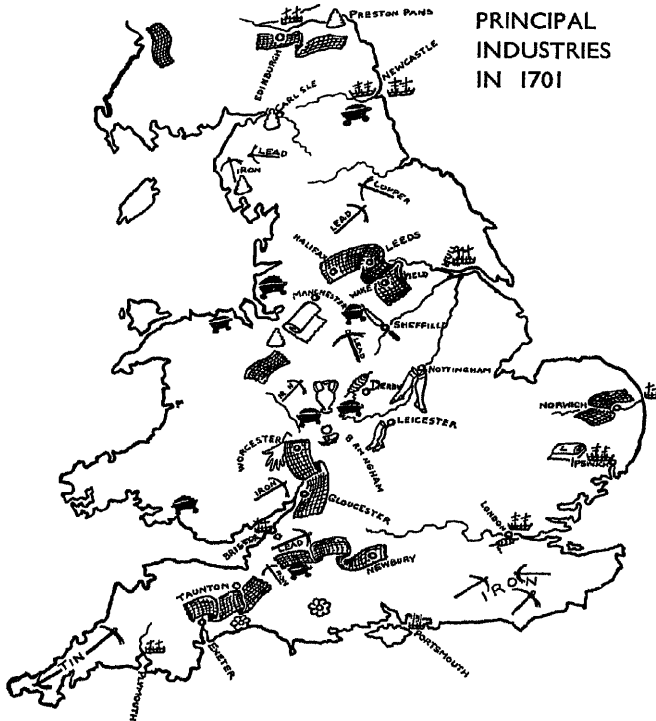
Bad roads churned into deep mud and became bogs in winter so that it was probably harder and not easier to get about than when Old Parr was a boy

The fairs were generally held at the end of the summer, when the roads were least likely to be impassable **Defoe**, 1660-1731 **Defoe**—the celebrated author of 'Robinson Crusoe'—gives an account of the biggest fair in England, which was held each September at Stourbridge just outside Cambridge

Stourbridge Fair The shops are placed in Rows like streets, whereof one is called Cheapside Here are Goldsmiths, Toyshops, Braziers, Turners, Milliners, Haberdashers, Hatters, Mercers, Drapers, Pewterers, China Warehouses with Coffee Houses, Taverns and Eating Houses innumerable, and all in tents and booths In the middle of the fair is a formal great square Here the dealers have room before every booth to take down and open their packs and bring in the wagons to load and unload In this part I have been informed there have been sold a hundred thousand pounds' worth of woollen manufactures in less than a week Here are also the wholesale grocers, salters, braziers, ironmerchants, wine merchants and the like, together with clothiers from Halifax, Leeds, Wakefield, and other towns in Yorkshire, and those from Lancashire with all sorts of Manchester ware, fustians and things made of cotton-wool,¹ of which the quantity is so great that they told me there were near a thousand pack horses with such goods from that side of the country There are also woollens from the West, from the country round Exeter, Taunton and Bristol

¹ Cotton

PRINCIPAL INDUSTRIES IN 1701



See where the things for Bourne Fair were made

Heavy goods brought by water All heavy goods are brought to the fair field by water on the River Great Ouse which runs close by the North West side of the fair on the way from Cambridge to Ely. By this means goods are brought from London and other parts. Sometimes no less than fifty hackney coaches come out of London and ply night and morning to take the people in and out of Cambridge.

There is a court of justice always open for deciding matters of controversy in the business of the fair.

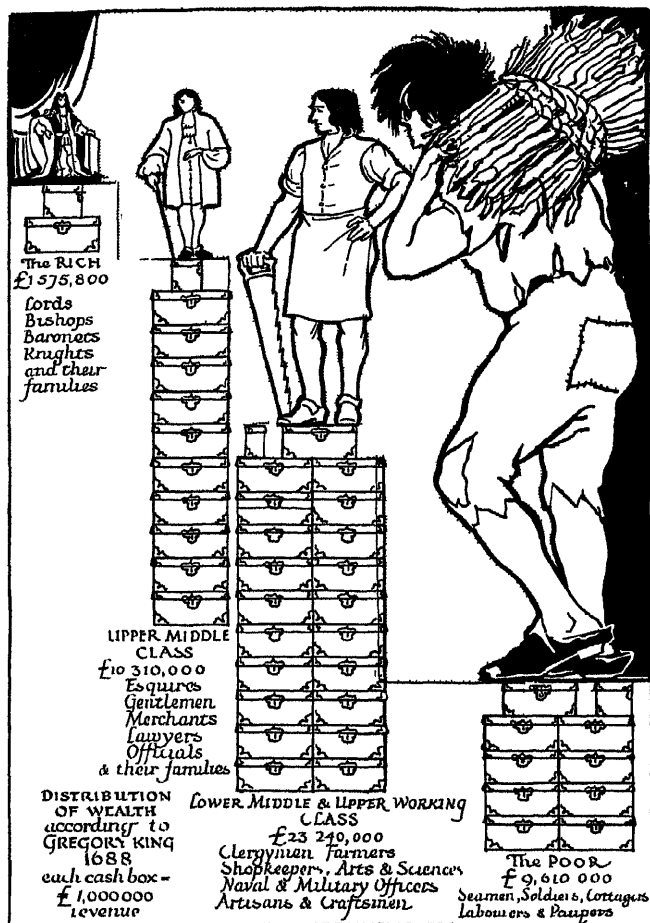
The fun of the fair When the great hurry of the wholesale business begins to be over, the gentry come in from all parts of the country round to spend their money at the goldsmiths, milliners, and so on. Some loose coins they reserve for puppet-shows, drolls and rope dancers. The last day is the horse fair, the whole ending with races, and, in a week more, there is scarce a sign that there has been such a thing.

How things were made Most of the things sold at Stourbridge Fair were made, as they had always been, in the weaver's or stocking-maker's or smith's own house or forge. The woollen

Work still done at home or in small workshops trade, which was still the most important in England, was all carried on in this way. A few trades such as brewing, soap boiling, and shipbuilding were carried on by fairly large groups of men who worked at the builder's yard or works, and of course mining was done at a pit which usually belonged to the owner of the land. The smelting of the ore too was generally done at the master's furnace and there were many more iron and coal mines than there had ever been before. But the iron and steel was generally worked up into such things as nails, chains or knives in small workshops by three or four men who worked for themselves or for a master.

II

No census yet There was no census taken in the time of William and Mary as there is now, but people were curious and discussed whether or not population was growing. People, in fact, began to be interested in what we now call statistics (how many people live in a town and how many work at one trade, how many at another). Defoe in the book in which he tells about Stourbridge Fair, 'A



In this chart the numbers of people are suggested by the size of the figures—each share of the National income is shown by the number of treasure boxes

Journey Through the Whole Island of Great Britain,' often compares the sizes of different towns and repeats what people told him about the numbers of people who worked at different trades. A man named Gregory King, who lived a little earlier, was particularly interested in this sort of comparison and has left a great many figures. He says, for instance, that there were 350,000 landlords and farmers in England in 1688 and only 110,000 merchants, shopkeepers and master craftsmen. There were also more people employed in agriculture than in all the crafts and the mineworks put together. He goes on to make one extraordinary statement. He says that more than half the working population, such as soldiers, sailors and unskilled labourers, were not paid enough wages to support themselves and their families, and so had to rely upon begging and stealing or on poor relief (see chart on page 125).

What
Gregory
King says

Robert Baxter, a well known Nonconformist minister, says that even those whom Gregory King did not class as very poor, often lived wretchedly.

Smallest
farmers very
poor

The poor tenants are glad of a piece of hanged bacon once a week and some few that can kill a bull eat now and then a bit of hanged beef¹ enough to try the stomach of an ostrich. If their sow pig, or their hen breed chickens, they cannot afford to eat them but must sell them to pay their rent. All the best of their butter and cheese they must sell. These men are enslaved, for none are so dependent as they on their landlords. They dare not displease them lest they turn them out of their houses.

Miners The craftsmen were better off than this and the miners worse. The normal food of the miners was rye bread, and to earn even this the whole family worked in the pits.

III

The new
ruling class

Such was the England that was ruled by the squires and the merchants. We may think these newly powerful Protestant gentry behaved badly in not paying 'a living

¹ Salted and dried

wage ' to the thousands of soldiers in the armies that they sent to fight for them abroad, to the sailors and miners on whose labour and danger so much of their commerce depended, and to the tens of thousands of people who tilled the ground. But for all that they were the most go-ahead and intelligent people in the country. They were still active, pushing on with such things as navigation, science, literature and the arts.

Before an account is given of the good side of their achievements at home and of what they did to increase learning and to help forward civilization, something must be said at this stage of what they did abroad. For everything that was going on in England happened against a background of foreign wars.

CHAPTER 40

THE FRENCH WARS

(1689 TO 1713)

THESE wars were fought against the French. With only one long interval (1714 to 1740) the armies of the two nations fought each other for nearly a hundred and thirty years, that is for four generations. There would be peace for seven or eight years, and then some new dispute would break out. There were altogether seven

Four generations of war with France

1689-1815

of these wars. The first of them began in 1689. England was not finally at peace with France till 1815. At first they were fought chiefly in Europe, but as time went on they spread, so because of the rivalry between two European nations (as Lord Macaulay, a famous historian, put it)—‘Black men fought on the coast of Coromandel and red men scalped each other by the great lakes of North America.’

What were wars like?

Wars were not as horrible then as they are now. The armies were smaller, there was little fighting in the winter, there were no aeroplanes, high explosives, poison gas, or machine guns. But the soldiers on both sides were badly paid and robbed the people over whose land they fought. There were no proper hospitals for the wounded or sick, no pensions for disabled men, no provision for the wives and families of the thousands who were away fighting. The poverty that was spoken of in the last chapter as haunting the beautiful villages of England might—with the new inventions, and the improvements that followed them—have turned to comfort and pros-

perity but for the everlasting drain of the French wars

On the other side of the Channel the condition of the people was—so eye-witnesses say—much worse. There was a Poor Law of a sort in England, but none in France. An English lady notes in 1718 that in France when post-horses were changed, 'The whole town comes out to beg with miserable starved faces and thin tattered clothes'

II

Why did the governments of the two countries begin such a struggle, and why did it go on so long? There were both political and economic reasons. Political reasons for the wars

In France, Louis XIV and his great ministers, Colbert and Louvois, stood for Catholicism and absolute monarchy. Many of the peasants were still serfs as the peasants of England had been in the fourteenth century. The French Parliament never met, and the French middle class could do nothing against the power of the King and his Court. They were deeply dissatisfied, but they had to submit. But in England, the middle class had won their victory. Those with aristocratic birth and with ability to flatter a king and his favourites were no longer the only people who had a chance of making a way in the world. Anyone who could get a middle-class education could try his luck. All sorts of careers were open to men of talent. Those who controlled the government of England were alarmed by the growth of a nation so differently governed.

For the policy of the French Court was to make France the greatest nation in the world. They were the bitter enemies of the smaller Protestant nations, such as Holland, Sweden and Prussia, and by a close alliance with Spain, still a powerful Catholic country, they hoped to get control of what is now Belgium. How they interfered in the affairs of Protestant nations was shown in England, when money sent by a French King made it possible for an English King to put off calling a new

Parliament For forty years no French army had been beaten in the field, and the French navy was as strong as the combined Dutch and English

William's
country,
Holland,
already at
war—1689

Louis takes
the side of
James

William's own country, Holland, was already at war with France when he came to the English throne, and he did not find it at all hard to persuade his new subjects to join in too War between France and England became almost inevitable when Louis XIV gave a home and support to James II, whom the ruling class in England had exiled For if Louis and Colbert should succeed in making France the most powerful country in Europe, James II might be able to get back his throne with French help Then what would happen to the things for which the Civil War in England had been fought?

So from the political side, the war with France, when it began, was a continuation abroad of the war between Parliament and King The first thing that William's armies had to do was in fact to fight in Scotland and Ireland against armies supported by France, and whose aim was to put James II back on the throne At sea the fleets fought each other with the same object, and there was also heavy fighting on land in the Netherlands

Treaty of
Ryswick,
1697

This part of the war, which is sometimes called 'The War of the English Succession', ended with the Treaty of Ryswick in 1697, when Louis admitted William's right to be King of England

War of the
Spanish
Succession,
1702

Then a new dispute broke out, this time over the Spanish succession Most of what is now Belgium, much of Italy, and most of the West Indies, as well as Spain itself, were ruled by the absolute Spanish king Charles II of Spain had no son Louis XIV, who had married his sister, persuaded Charles to leave his crown to his own grandson, Philip If the heir to the French throne died, as seemed likely, Philip would then inherit both kingdoms. This was a most alarming prospect!

Holland, most of the German Kingdoms, Austria and England supported another candidate to the Spanish throne

III

But there were, as usual, also economic reasons for the wars. Louis and Colbert were doing all that an absolute government could do to encourage the growth of French trade. This meant that French and English merchants were competing, and that (as usual) bred bad feeling. So high did feeling run that huge duties were put upon French goods that people in England wanted to buy, and in France upon English goods. These tariffs almost destroyed what had been a flourishing trade and incidentally provided boys and girls of to-day with fine smuggling stories.

The nations, in their attempts to build up their own trade, had sent out colonists to America, and, in India and other tropical countries, had established the 'factories' or trading depots spoken of in Chapter 32. So there were boundary disputes in Canada and wars in India, and when England was victorious in Europe she claimed from France land or trading rights in the New World. For instance, after victories in 1713 France surrendered colonies in Newfoundland and in North America and the monopoly of carrying negro slaves from Africa to South America.

These consequences of the French wars were so important that they will need a chapter to themselves.

IV

In Europe the French wars were mostly fought in Flanders, the ground that was fought over in the Great War of 1914 to 1918.

William III, who at first commanded the English armies, was an experienced general, and though he was never able to beat the French very decisively, on the whole he had the better of the fighting.

Before the beginning of the next stage—'The War of the Spanish Succession'—William was dead, and had been succeeded on the throne of England by James II's

Anne, 1702 daughter, Anne, and as general of the English armies by John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough Marlborough led the English armies in a series of great victories—Blenheim (not far from Vienna) in 1704, Ramilies in 1706, Oudenarde in 1708, and Malplaquet in 1709 (all English victories in Flanders) All England rejoiced at these victories But there were some—notably the Quakers—who thought about the other side of war These men of peace wondered that the splendidly uniformed colour-sergeants with their drums should so easily be able to persuade young men to go out to kill their fellow creatures An old Quaker who lived in Hampstead gave his opinion

What the old Quaker thought Why should men clothed in scarlet and wearing caps two feet high enlist citizens by a noise made with two little sticks on an asses skin extended? And when, after a victory is gained, the whole city of London is illuminated, when the sky is a blaze with fireworks and a noise is heard in the air of thanksgiving, of bells, of organs and of the cannon, we are deeply affected with sadness of spirit for the havoc which is the occasion of these public rejoicings

CHAPTER 41

TALENTS THE PASSPORT TO GLORY

(1702 TO 1745)

BUT in spite of war and poverty a very real new civilization was growing up in England, though its blessings were limited to the small number of people who were either well-born or who could get themselves a good education. A small circle of people gave to the world much good architecture, much good literature, and some good painting and music. The first English newspapers appeared, the first English novels were written. Politics were interesting enough to keep ambitious people lively, but they were no longer the life-and-death matter that they had been. There were two political parties who were nicknamed the 'Whigs' and the 'Tories', each of which tried to intrigue and bribe its way to power. On the whole the Whigs were the more progressive and the Tories the more conservative. But except to the people concerned—to a man who passionately wanted to have a government post for himself, and lesser posts for all his friends—it made very little difference during this time which party was in power. The work of ministers was much easier than it had been for a century and more, and there was no real trouble over religious questions or with the crown. Queen Anne, who had succeeded William III, was a rather stupid woman and did not try to increase her power.

Good literature and architecture

Whigs and Tories

Queen Anne, 1702

At home the most important event of her reign was the Act of Union between England and Scotland. The

Act of Union
with Scot-
land, 1707

Scots now sent forty-five members to the English Parliament and Scots could trade with England or with English colonies without paying customs dues. The system of holding land in Scotland had been feudal, and with her mountains and her colder climate, Scotland had up to now been a terribly poor country. She had already got many more schools than England, however, so her people were better educated than the English. Now she began to go ahead.

George I,
1714

When Anne died without any surviving children, she was succeeded by her German cousin George with no more than slight trouble from the 'Jacobite' party (those who thought James II, his son, or later his grandson, ought to be King). George I was the ruler of the little German state of Hanover, and a great grandson of James I. He was a middle-aged man who could not speak a word of English and who was interested only in German affairs. The government of England he left entirely to his English

George II,
1727

ministers. His son, George II, showed sign of wanting to interfere, but he had a sensible wife, Queen Caroline, who considered that the best way of staying on the English throne was to sit still. She generally managed to keep the peace between the King and whichever ministers were in power.

Party
Government

This point—who the King's ministers were to be—was now settled in a new way. Whichever party (Whigs or Tories) had a majority in the House of Commons 'formed a ministry', with its leader as Prime Minister. He picked out half a dozen of his chief followers to fill offices such as that of Lord Chancellor, or to be Secretaries of State. These chief ministers were known as 'The Cabinet', all acted together, were responsible to Parliament and had to submit new laws and the renewal of all taxes as Bills to be voted on. If Parliament did not approve of what was planned or had been done, it could make the ministers resign by throwing out their Bills.

The 'Prime
Minister'

The great Whig leader, Sir Robert Walpole, was the first to be called (as a nickname) 'Prime Minister'.

II

Walpole was an interesting man. He loved hunting, did little or nothing to make things better for his poorer countrymen at home, but was a lover of peace abroad. It was because of his efforts that there was the twenty-six years' interval in the French wars. He was as clever over public finance as he was over that very private finance, the art of bribery. 'There ought to be very few Prime Ministers,' said Walpole. 'It isn't good for many people to know how bad men are—I only knew one woman who wouldn't take money,' he added, 'she took diamonds!'

Sir Robert
Walpole

1721-1742

Just before Walpole became Prime Minister, there had been a great financial scandal. What was called a 'Joint Stock Company' (see page 69) had been formed to trade in the South Seas. This 'South Sea Company' prospered and, wanting more capital, made a strange offer to the Government—to pay seven million pounds for the privilege of taking over the National Debt. By well-placed bribes the directors induced the Government to accept this offer.

South Sea
Bubble,
1711-1719

The public—now supposing that the South Sea Company had the Government behind it—rushed to invest, country clergymen and old ladies with savings all came, and the £100 shares went up to £1,000 in a general rage for speculation. Then the investors first began to wonder if any company could make profits enough to make their investment worth while, and then to sell their shares for anything they could get. The South Sea Bubble burst, and thousands of people were ruined. Officially Walpole had had nothing to do with the crash (though he had privately made a lot of money in the early stages), and when the story of the bribery of ministers came out he became head of the Government.

III

Yet England seemed a wonderful place to many people who belonged to the middle class in France. Voltaire was a brilliant young French writer who landed here in

Voltaire
looks at
England

1726 He came straight from the Bastille prison in France, where he had been sent for writing satiric verses about Court favourites. He was the son of a lawyer, and in France was never received as an equal by great people. But in England he found, he said, a country where 'Talents are the passport to glory'. One of the sights that moved him most was the funeral of Sir Isaac Newton (see Chapter 37) in Westminster Abbey.

Sir Isaac Newton's Funeral The greatest men in the nation disputed who should have the honour of holding up his pall. They interred a professor of mathematics as if he had been a king who had made his people happy.

There was much more equality in England. In France, for instance, the nobles were exempt from taxation, but in England they had to pay. In France 'scribbling' was only fit for lawyers' sons. In England men with great titles were proud to be writers, historians and poets. In England, declared Voltaire, the professional writer or the man of science, if he is also a man of talent 'is sure of making a fortune'. In France unless he can flatter a King's favourite he will very likely find himself—like poor Voltaire himself—in the Bastille. Voltaire lists a number of famous English writers and scientists who had been given good posts.

Mr Addison was raised to the post of Secretary of State. Sir Isaac Newton made Warden of the Royal Mint, Mr Congreve was Secretary for Jamaica, Mr Prior an Ambassador, Dr Swift is Dean of St Patrick's in Dublin, and is more revered there than the Archbishop himself. In England it has taken seas of blood to drown the idol of despotism, but the English do not think that they have bought their laws too dearly.

IV

Jonathan Swift, 1667-1745 Dean Swift, of whom Voltaire speaks, was the author of 'Gulliver's Travels,' about which, when it was first published, 'All the people of taste in the town ran mad' with enthusiasm. The tale has been a favourite with

boys and girls ever since. If readers want amusement let them get it out of the library at once. They must not, however, allow anyone to try to explain the satire. This marvellous tale, of Liliputians an inch high and of Brobdingnags sixty feet high, is much too good to be spoilt. It is fun to know, however, that when it was published some people took it quite seriously. A bishop who read it said that, 'he hardly believed a word of it'.

Defoe, one of whose books was quoted in Chapter 39, was another author known by all boys and girls. He wrote 'Robinson Crusoe,' one of the first and best of all 'Desert Island' stories.

Hogarth, one of the few great English painters, was at work at this time.

Hogarth,
1697-1764

Handel, composer of the great Oratorio 'The Messiah', lived in London too, and in architecture the age was a great one. Vanbrugh, who designed the splendid but uncomfortable palace of Blenheim for the Duke of Marlborough, said that the world 'is run building mad' and all over England great new houses were rising. Every new building was discussed with interest by a society that thought it was part of a good education to understand and enjoy this art. Most of these palaces still stand.

CHAPTER 42

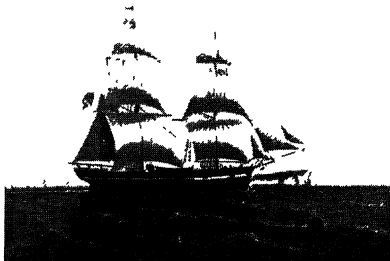
GREAT MEN AND SOME DISCONTENTS

(1745 to 1785)

THOUGH the eighteenth century has been called both 'the age of reason' and 'the age of invention', it was by no means an age without adventures. Some seemed like attempts to bring back a past age.

The Young
Pretender,
1745

In 1745, soon after Sir Robert Walpole ceased to be Prime Minister, the young and handsome Prince Charles, grandson of James II, made a last effort to get back the crown. The movement was almost entirely Scottish and the French would not help him. 'The Young Pretender' as he was often called, landed in Scotland with only seven men. There he gathered an army, marched into Edinburgh, won a victory over an English army, marched South to Manchester and got to Derby—125 miles from London. Then things began to go against him, and he had to retreat North again. The Duke of Cumberland pursued him with an army and, when he beat Prince Charles and his followers, behaved so cruelly that he was nicknamed 'Butcher Cumberland'. Prince Charles wandered for five months among the moorlands and mountains of the West of Scotland with a price on his head, but finally escaped to Skye disguised as a woman. The ballad-makers sang about Charles and his wanderings. Such songs as 'Will ye no come back again', 'Speed little boat', 'Charlie loves good ale and wine' and 'Farewell Manchester' are probably known to most boys and girls. They are beautiful and—like much in



COLLIER BRIG

Fleets of such ships brought coals down the coast from the North to London. Note her jib and fore-sails (see p. 147)

the life of Scotland at that time—seem to belong to an earlier age.

II

George II was succeeded by his son George III, who made an effort to get back at least as much power as William III had had. He did not in the end succeed. It may have been because opposition from him obliged them to be alert, that there were, during his reign, so many brilliant orators and even thinkers in Parliament. Pitt—afterwards Earl of Chatham—Edmund Burke, Charles James Fox and Sheridan, were all magnificent speakers. So great were they that they sometimes even succeeded in convincing their opponents by what they said. This is a thing that happens more rarely than the reader might

George III,
1760

Great
Orators in
Parliament

suppose For two generations every event was chronicled and debated in the House of Commons with a fire and eloquence such as had not been heard since the days of Pym

III

Both George III and the Jacobites were, in their different ways, trying to put the clock back But there were many men in England who were steadily pushing forward, and it is in their work that the beginnings of modern England can be seen Dean Tucker, who was a clergyman economist, says that everywhere new machines were being used to speed up the process of manufacture 'so that one man can do the work of many'

Inventions shorten labour	Few countries are equal, perhaps none excel, the English in the Numbers and Contrivance of their Machines to shorten labour The Dutch are superior to them in the Use and Application of Wind-Mills for sawing Timber, pressing out Oil, making Paper and the like But with regard to Mines and Metals of all sorts the English are uncommonly dexterous in their Contrivances Some are for landing the Ores out of Pits, such as Cranes and Horse Engines, others again for draining off Water, such as Water Wheels and Steam Engines
And lower prices	At Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Sheffield and other Manufacturing places, almost every Master Manufactuer hath a new Invention By these new Abridgements of labour the price of goods is prodigiously lowered

IV

Medicine	Other men were making discoveries in medicine. Small-pox had been a terrible scourge for the last hundred years Many thousands of people died of it (Mary, the wife of William III, was one of them) Those who recovered often lost their sight and were terribly disfigured It had been discovered in the East that there was a mild kind of small-pox, and that those who had had it did not catch the severe sort, so many people protected their children by choosing a time when the weather was cool
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and the child well, and then 'inoculating' him with the mild variety. About 1796 an English country doctor made some experiments which led him to the discovery of a better preventative. It had been noticed that dairymaids very rarely had small-pox. Jenner connected this with the fact that they did have a mild disease called cow-pox. He tried the experiment of inoculating people with cow-pox and conquered small-pox. Not only was this work of Jenner's the origin of our modern vaccination but also of a new branch of medicine. Much work is now being done by doctors who work on the fact that one attack of an infectious disease often protects the patient from a second. Their object is to protect people without this unpleasant and dangerous first attack.

Edward Jenner,
1749-1823

John Hunter was another great doctor who was making experiments at this time. Jenner consulted him about his way of preventing small-pox, saying that he 'thought' he had discovered something. Hunter's answer was, 'Don't think, try, be patient, be accurate.' Jenner took his advice.

V

While the methods of manufacture and the knowledge of medicine improved, other men carried on the work of art and learning. During this time there lived in England three celebrated painters: Reynolds, Gainsborough and Romney (this book was written in the house which Romney built to end his days in). Sir Hans Sloane and the Adam brothers were excellent architects. David Garrick and Mrs. Siddons (look at the picture on page 142) were among the best English actors and actresses who ever lived. Goldsmith and Sheridan wrote brilliant comedies that are still often played to-day. And among the poets there was Thomas Gray, the author of the famous 'Elegy in a Country Churchyard'.

Great names
in Art

The learned Dr. Johnson compiled the first dictionary of the English language. Adam Smith was England's

The first
English
Dictionary



DAVID GARRICK AND ONE OF HIS LEADING LADIES IN 'MACBETH'

Notice that, like the Elizabethans (see p 54), they are acting in 'modern dress', but, unlike the Elizabethans, they have elaborate scenery

first great economist, and his book 'The Wealth of Nations' is read to-day by every student of economics. The first great economist, Adam Smith, 1713-1790
People were curious to know

'What makes a nation great, what keeps it so,
What ruins empires and lays cities flat'

Adam Smith studied how people in his own day produced and exchanged their goods, and his conclusion was that they did things best when the division of labour was great and government interference was small

Edward Gibbon, who lived at the same time, was the first great English historian. Like Adam Smith, he also wanted to know what were the things that changed the fate of nations. But instead of studying his own time he studied the history of Rome, when the story of nearly all the civilized world was concentrated in the history of one nation. Some people still think that no greater history has ever been written than Gibbon's 'Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire'. The first great English historian, Edward Gibbon, 1737-1794

VI

But there were many people in the country who were not content. Riots were frequent, crime was common, and two of the best-known men of the time were, in a sense, rebels. Some discontents

By the time of the Georges the religious enthusiasm and excitement of the seventeenth century had disappeared. The great majority of men were still Christians, but they had ceased to care very much about religion. As people became less interested so did most clergymen, and many of them seemed quite content just to conduct services on Sunday and to live during the rest of the week like ordinary country gentlemen.

To John Wesley, the son of a Church of England clergyman, this state of affairs seemed terrible. As a boy he had been noted for his love of reasoning and for his methodical way of setting about things. When he was studying at Oxford (to be a clergyman like his father), John Wesley, 1707-1788

he took what he was taught very seriously indeed. He believed that religion was more important than anything



PAYING THE PARSON HIS TITHES

Notice the charming clothes and furniture. The Parson wears a wig

else in the world, and that the poor ought to have the Gospel preached to them as Christ had ordered.

But he could not persuade many of the rich and easy-going parsons to think so too. When they would not

help, he and a few followers set about to revive religion in England by a new method. He was a magnificent preacher, and for years he rode up and down the country, through cold and heat, teaching the gospel. At first he was often mobbed, but in the end he got an immense following. Before he died, 'Methodism', as his movement was called, had become a great force in the country. To-day there is hardly a town or village in England without a Methodist chapel. Methodism

Another 'rebel' was John Wilkes, quite a different sort of person and famous for quite a different reason. Some people were discontented with Parliament. For one thing the men who were carrying on the trade and industry of the country (whom we may call the 'junior middle class' as distinct from the 'senior middle class' of great merchants and landed gentry) were scarcely represented. They had no members in the House of Lords, and in the Commons they were outnumbered by the country gentry, especially as many of the new industrial towns sent in no members. Wilkes complained, too, that Parliament, and in particular the House of Commons, was becoming more concerned with its own privileges than with the freedom of the people. Parliament

Wilkes first became known for a quarrel with the King. In number 45 of his paper, 'The North Briton,' he had criticized the speech which George III had made when he opened Parliament in 1762. The criticism was very mild, but the King was angry and Wilkes was imprisoned. No 45

His clash with the King made Wilkes extremely popular, and when he was released he stood as a candidate in the Parliamentary elections for Middlesex. The support he got was enormous, particularly from the poor, who had no votes but who showed their wishes emphatically. They made every householder chalk up the magic number 45 on his door, they refused to allow any carriages to pass unless their coachmen wore Wilkes' colours, and, on one occasion pulled the Austrian Ambassador from his coach and chalked '45' on the soles of his shoes.

‘Wilkes and
Liberty’

But though he was elected, the Commons would have none of Wilkes. He had been M P for Aylesbury, and they had expelled him for publishing the ‘North Briton’. Now they refused to have him back, and ordered another election. Again he was returned, again the Commons expelled him and ordered a third election. Once more Wilkes was returned, and once more the Commons rejected him. This time they declared that his opponent ought to have been elected and accepted him as the member for Middlesex, in other words, they took from the voters the power to choose their own member.

Parliament seemed to have won, but all over the country people sent in petitions against the way in which he had been treated. Wilkes was able to get his revenge some time later, when the Commons tried to stop people reporting its debates. He had been elected an Alderman of London, and when Parliament ordered certain London printers to be arrested he arranged for them to be brought before his own court and then discharged them as innocent. When the Commons sent their own messenger to seize the printers he had the messenger arrested. When the Commons sent for Wilkes himself to appear before them he refused to go, and they dared not force him. Since that time all Parliamentary debates have been reported and can be read by the general public. In 1773 Wilkes himself returned to the House.

CHAPTER 43

ADVENTURE IN EAST AND WEST

(1720 TO 1795)

ALL this time sailors and explorers were helping the men of science to finish and apply work that had been done by such men as Newton and Halley. The result of their voyages was often not only to add a fact to the world's knowledge, but also vast tracts of land to the Empire claimed by King George III. The voyages of the great Captain Cook will give the reader an idea of what was happening. James Cook was employed in charting and survey work when he first joined the Royal Navy. His 'sailing directions' for Newfoundland and Labrador were wonderfully accurate, and when the Royal Society asked the Admiralty to send a ship to the Pacific to make some observations on the planet Venus, Cook was given the command of the expedition.

In 1768 he was made captain of the *Endeavour*. She had been a 'Whitby collier' and was typical of the handiest merchant vessels of her day. If readers look at the picture on page 139 they will see that she carries fore-sails and jib. These new sails made the vessels of this time much easier to handle than those of the time of Drake or even of Charles II. Sailing ships had reached a new stage in their development. On his first voyage, after the observation of Venus had been made, Cook went to New Zealand and sailed round the Islands and charted them for the first time. He examined the whole Eastern coast of Australia, picking his way among un-

charted rocks and the Great Barrier Reef. He was later sent on a second voyage to explore the Southern Hemisphere and to try and find out if there was really a great Southern continent there.

During his first voyage many of the men died of scurvy. Before he made the second, Cook made inquiries, from leading doctors, whether this terrible scourge could be prevented. James Lind—a naval surgeon—had the answer: give your men fresh fruit, if there is no fresh fruit give them lemon juice. Also make sure of plenty of fresh drinking water by having on board a distilling apparatus, and make your drinking water from the clean sea water. Cook followed Lind's instructions on this voyage, which lasted three years, and only one man died out of a ship's company of 118. Not only did Cook take care of his seamen, but the accounts of his voyages make good reading, because he behaved well to the uncivilized peoples that he found. He is, in fact, one of the most delightful explorers of our history.

II

But though Cook added thousands of square miles to the British Empire, it seemed then that the growth of the American colonies was more important. There were half a million colonists in 1720 and at least one and a half million in 1760. This was partly because of the birth of children in America and partly because fresh colonists, came from England. Labourers and farmers came searching for a better living, disbanded soldiers, sentenced criminals, and Jacobite rebels were sent out to work without pay as a punishment. Then from Ireland came persecuted Catholics and from Switzerland and Germany persecuted Protestants, while into Maryland and Virginia thousands of negro slaves were brought from Africa. In 1700 there were nearly 300,000 negroes.

As the population grew, the colonies spread further and further North, West and South. New land was

cultivated, new villages were set up and one new colony was formed—Georgia—in 1733

The West Indies, too, were flourishing, though there were not so many white colonists as on the mainland, for the sugar plantations were worked by negro slaves

In India the East India Company's trade was expanding and more and stronger 'factories' were built

But France, too, was exploring the Pacific, France, too, was building up colonies in the West Indies and expanding her trade in India From 1740 to 1763 scarcely a year passed without some fighting between France and Britain somewhere or other in the world, though for most of that time there was official peace At first England was not particularly successful in this struggle, but in 1756 things began to go definitely in her favour William Pitt, the Prime Minister, organized the war extremely well at home, and in Canada a young general named Wolfe captured Quebec

In India, too, England began to be successful, and Robert Clive defeated the French and the natives who sided with them There will be more to be said of all this at the end of the chapter

When peace with France was declared in 1763, at the end of the Seven Years War, England had a far greater empire than she had ever had before In Africa she had gained Senegal, in India the East India Company practically ruled the enormous provinces of Bengal and the Carnatic, a dominion stretching right down the Eastern coast In America the French yielded Canada, Nova Scotia and Crenada in the West Indies Thus ended the French dream of a great empire both in the East and the West

III

But these new and old possessions were not passive things like chairs and tables, and sixteen years later a struggle began between England and the greater part of her American colonies The war which had given

West Indies

Hot competition between France and England

India

Clive

Peace with France, 176

What England had gained

Trouble begins in America

England so much territory had, like all wars, cost a great deal of money. Taxes in England were very high and it seemed to English statesmen only reasonable that the English colonies in America should help to pay for the war. So Parliament in England passed a law that ordered that newspapers, bills, letters and other papers must be taxed by having stamps put on them which were to be made and sold by the English government (receipts and cheques are still taxed in this way).

What led up
to it

Stamp
Duties

Colonists' trade is
restricted

The
Colonists
resent the
Stamps

Now up to that time the colonies had been left very much to their own devices and had been nearly independent. The colonists were horrified at the new taxes. They objected not only to the stamp duties, but to restrictions that were laid on their trade. Nearly all trade between them and the rest of the world was supposed to pass through England and to be carried either in British or colonial ships. To protect the British iron interests there were restrictions on the making of iron and steel in America. What was more to England's credit was that regulations were made to give the American Indians some protection against the colonists.

When the stamps began to arrive in America nobody would buy them. If England could enforce the Stamp Act who could tell what Parliament might do next? In Boston and New York shops were closed, people remained indoors, bells were tolled, flags were flown at half-mast, and it was decided to buy no more English goods. For years the colonists had been limiting the powers of the governors who were sent out from England, just as people in England had been limiting the power of the King. Now they were not going simply to knuckle under to the English Parliament. The French had been defeated and the colonists did not feel the need of English protection.

In England opinion was divided. Burke and Pitt, for instance, thought the colonists right.

Burke backs
the Colonists

This Kingdom has no right to lay taxes on the colonies. America is obstinate, America is almost in open rebellion. I rejoice that America has resisted.

Benjamin Franklin, of Philadelphia, was sent to Eng- Franklin,
land He was a remarkable person He ran a news- 1709-1790
paper, founded a library, and was well known as an
amateur scientist He told the House of Commons that
if they persisted the consequences would be

The total loss of the respect and affection that the people of What
America bear to this country, and of all the commerce that Franklin sa
depends on that respect and affection

But though, when the people of America refused to
trade with England, the Stamp Act was repealed, Eng-
land challenged the colonies by passing a law declaring
that Parliament had a right to tax

In 1773 the *Dartmouth* and three other ships entered The Boston
Boston Harbour with a hundred chests of tea on board Tea Party,
Rather than let the tea be landed angry colonists—dis- 1773
guised as Mohawk Indians—boarded the ships, ripped
open the hatches, dragged the tea chests on deck, and
in three hours had dumped them all into the harbour
Such was the famous 'Boston Tea Party'

This was a challenge Parliament took it as such,
and decided to assert its authority The Charter of
Massachusetts was cancelled, and an army was sent to
close Boston harbour The town faced starvation

Swift couriers saddled their horses and rode post- The other
haste to appeal for help to people in the other colonies Colonies
The whole length of the American sea-board stood by back Boston
Boston Carolina sent rice, Virginia corn and bread,
Philadelphia 1,000 barrels of flour One man drove a
flock of sheep up from Connecticut A Congress was
called and, as one of the delegates said

Distinctions between Virginians, Pennsylvanians, New
Yorkers and New Englanders are no more I am not a
Virginian, I am an American

Soon American and English armies were facing each
other, the American army under the command of George
Washington At a second Congress, in 1776, he and

Thomas Jefferson drew up the famous Declaration of Independence This is how it begins

Declaration of Independence, 1776 All men are created equal, they have a right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness To secure these rights governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new government

Franklin again In the fighting the war at first went against the American armies Franklin had been sent to Europe to try to get the help of France, the country which had been ready to fight England on any pretext for nearly a hundred years There were now a great many people at the French Court who had read the work of Voltaire and the many other great writers who agreed with him America was a nice long way off, and the French courtiers were thrilled by the ideas of the men who had drawn up the Declaration of Independence So the most absolute king in the old world gave his help to the setting up of the New World's first republic

American Independence, 1783 With the help of the French, Washington's army beat the English, and in 1783 a treaty was made in which England recognized the independence of the United States of America George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton, who led the new republic, were three great men, and it would be fascinating to tell how they welded the states together Little by little the thirteen states whose history had each been different and whose interests were often opposite, managed to settle upon the constitution by which the United States is still governed

IV

India, 1763-1783 In India the same twenty years were equally important It is difficult for the modern reader to imagine what India was then like, but perhaps it can best be compared with China to-day An ancient civilization was breaking

up The Mogul Emperors had ruled for 200 years They were no longer able to control India There were rival generals with an army but no territory, and rival princes with a territory but no army, and often there were no settled frontiers between states Yet the situation was even more complicated and the chaos greater than in China, for at least the inhabitants of China are all Chinese and all have more or less the same religion But in India one wave of conquest had succeeded another ever since the time of the ancient Greeks Each race had left descendants, so that in one of the most thickly inhabited parts of the world, there lived side by side peoples whose religions told them to look upon each other as accursed

To Europeans, India seemed the land of romance and endless opportunity to grow rich The soil was fertile, spices grew upon the trees, there were mines of rubies, there were cunning craftsmen who could weave muslin fine as cobweb, make woollen shawls that would pass through a ring, or draw out a gold thread to spider thinness and then twist it into delicate filigree Princes rode on elephants There were temples with golden roofs There were civilizations more ancient than that of Rome, there were ruined cities deep in the jungle where evil spirits guarded untold treasure Into this strange and tempting country the British came to trade

They found, just as the Romans had found when they came to Britain, that their trade was hindered by the wars between different sections of the inhabitants, by the general restlessness of the country, and by lack of roads and bridges Just as the Romans had done in Britain, the British in India began to try to get rid of these obstacles by ruling the country But the conquest of India in the eighteenth century was much more complicated than the conquest of Britain in the first The Romans, for instance, were the only powerful outsiders who wanted Britain In India, the British, French, Portuguese and Dutch were all rivals One would side

End of
Mogul
Empire

Fairy-Tale
riches

Romans in
Britain and
British in
India

Trade hin-
dered in an
unsettled
country

Why things
in India
were so
complicated

with one native state, another with the other, and already in India whole nations with civilizations much more ancient than the British were at each other's throats
 Cæsar and Clive Cæsar too, when he invaded Britain, had represented the Roman government. But Clive and the generals who began the conquest of India were responsible, not to the government, but to the merchants and shareholders of the East India Company, a group which had been formed for trading and not for conquering and governing a territory larger than Europe

Adam Smith, in his 'Wealth of Nations,' spoke of the rule of the East India Company as 'perhaps the worst of all governments for any country whatsoever'

1773 The East India Company was wasting its assets, and there were many people in England besides Adam Smith who understood and cared a little about the people of India. So Acts were passed which gave Parliament part control over the East India Company, and a man named Warren Hastings was appointed as the first Governor-General

Warren Hastings, 1732-1818 Hastings' task was an impossibly difficult one. He had to consider shareholders who, for the most part, took short views and did not care a pin for the welfare of India. He had to keep some sort of a 'balance of power' between warring Indian rulers who cared as little, he inherited a system of wholesale bribery which would have frightened Sir Robert Walpole. Finally, he had to answer for everything that happened in India, to the British Parliament, where the Whigs disapproved on moral grounds of nearly all that had been done, but were yet not willing to give up the vast profits of Indian trade.

His trial, 1788-1795 When Hastings came home he was impeached for his conduct in India. All the evil of what was undoubtedly an evil and piratical, but immensely profitable, system was heaped upon him, and he, not those who had given him his orders and drawn the dividends, was blamed

CHAPTER 44

HOW ENGLAND HAD GROWN RICHER

(1700 to 1800)

THE reader will be itching to ask how this country managed to afford to fight wars in Europe, America and Asia, and to send her ships exploring. Were the people of England being forced down into deeper poverty? Any one who knows the English countryside will answer 'no'.

For here, to this day, stand not only the palaces that were built for great lords and Indian 'nabobs', the comfortable inns, and the neat houses for the parson, doctor and lawyer, but rows and squares of little houses for the poorer people that were better than any the peasants and poor townspeople of former times had inhabited.

All through the reigns of George II and III there had been improvements and inventions in making and exchanging everything that people need. This was how the bills had been paid. A strange new invention was being used in a few mines, 'the engine for raising water by fire'. Out of this clumsy pump were developed the great engines that to-day work the belts of half the factories in the world. But we shall put off a discussion of this till the next volume, for then we can follow it from its clumsy beginnings up to the present time. For the same reason very little will be said here of other inventions without which the steam engine would have been very little use. These were new devices for spinning, weaving and printing cotton, for smelting iron, for making steel, for baking china and pottery.

How was a
this paid for

Proof that
England was
growing
richer

Some things
that will be
described
later

Better looms

It is enough to say here that all through the hundred years from 1700 to 1800 such great improvements had been made that all kinds of goods, from ribbons and buttons, to chests of drawers and coal, had begun to be more plentiful than ever before

II

Transport When more and more things were manufactured for sale and not just used in the village in which they were made, transport became important, the bad roads became unbearable, and some better way of carrying heavy goods had to be found. The first thing that was done was to try to deepen the rivers that were already used to carry goods inland. For instance, the Rivers Aire and Calder were improved to serve the cloth-makers of the West Riding, and the Mersey was made navigable for larger vessels. The coasting vessels that carried so much of the trade of England were now much more manageable, because they were better rigged.

Canals The next step in inland water transport was not just to improve the old waterways but to make new ones. The first important English canal was built by a brilliant engineer named James Brindley to connect the coal mines of the Duke of Bridgewater at Worsley with Manchester. The canal was only a few miles long, yet as soon as it was in use the price of coal in Manchester fell by half. Canal building went rapidly ahead and soon there was a whole network of them linking up the towns round Birmingham and another in Lancashire, while the famous 'Grand Junction Canal' linked the Mersey with the Thames.¹

Roads But to go by canal was very slow. Roads were needed too. A law had been passed in 1555 by which the men of each parish were supposed to keep up their part of the road. Most of them neglected their duties badly,

¹ The word 'navvy' dates from this time and was a nickname for the men who were digging canals for 'inland navigation.'

and none of them kept their sections really fit for heavy traffic. For instance, in 1730 a coach containing George II and Queen Caroline upset at Parson's Green because the road was so bad, and the Queen was begged by ministers who had to come and see her, not to live in Kensington Palace in the winter, because of the 'impassable gulf of mud' through which they had to ride.

When all this was felt to be unbearable, there came an odd development. Private companies were formed called Turnpike Trusts. Each one undertook to keep up a section of the road, in return for the right to charge a toll to travellers. Each company was out for profit and had nothing to do with any other. The consequence was sometimes that a splendid length of road laid out by a good engineer and kept up by a good company would suddenly end in a muddy track because that was where that particular company's section finished. On the whole, though, the turnpike roads were better than the old ones.

The
Turnpike
Companies

III

Another change was that people began to gather in towns, and much larger groups of people began to work together, one doing one part of the job and some another. Sometimes the work would be done in one large building, but more often it would be done in the workmen's house, messengers or overseers taking the half-finished work from one to another.

At last the citizens of a few English towns began to realize that the old medieval ways of throwing rubbish and slops into the street was not only disgusting but caused disease. Under what were called 'Improvement Acts' Manchester, Birmingham, London and other towns got powers from Parliament to raise money to cover in open drains and to pave and light their streets. Simple as this sounds, people's health began to be better. Fewer children died, people lived longer, and so about 1750 the population began to grow faster than it had

'Improved'
Towns, 1762

1776

ever done before. It was still not what we should now call big, and was much smaller than that of France. Only after 1760 were there as many people in all England as there are in London to-day. But for the next hundred and fifty years the population of Britain grew faster and faster (look at the chart at the back of this book), and it has only just stopped growing now at well over forty millions.

Rise in numbers of people, 1760

IV

And now we come to the thing on which the riches and better health of England finally depended. Food! At long last there was a real and marked improvement in the way of cultivating the land. Even in the country, many children had suffered from rickets and even scurvy, for there had been no fresh milk or butter and no fresh meat all winter. But now scurvy practically died out, at any rate in the country. Here and there an intelligent farmer—one Jethro Tull in Berkshire for instance—had come to the conclusion that his forefathers' methods of growing crops were wasteful of the farmer's most precious treasures, time, seed, land and labour.

Others—Robert Bakewell was one—began to wonder if something could not be done about such problems as sheep that would neither grow wool nor fatten, about long-legged pigs whose ribs, however much they ate, stuck out like the hay-racks at which they were fed, and about cattle and horses that were poor milkers or workers. Bakewell came to the conclusion that what was wanted in the first place was to breed only from the best stock—plump pigs and well-fleeced sheep. The new methods were a success and England became famous for her farm beasts. But in England stock could only be fed during the winter if more crops, and especially root crops, were grown.

Food and Farming

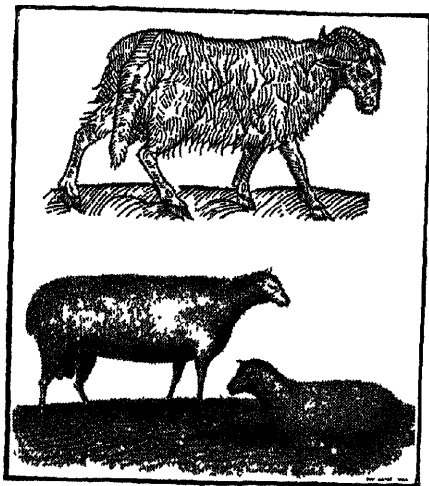
Tull, 1733

Bakewell

In the Middle Ages, each farmer had grown his crops on small unfenced strips of land which lay scattered among the strips of his neighbours in the two or three

great cornfields that lay round the village. He kept and fed his horses, cattle and sheep, not in his own pastures, but on the common that lay beyond the arable fields and, after harvest, on the arable fields themselves.

It is not quite true, as some historians have said, that good farming was impossible under such conditions, but



At the top is the old type of sheep with long legs and ragged fleece

Below, an improved breed with close thick fleece

From old drawings

they made better methods difficult. The cornfields were used for grazing as soon as the harvest was over, so one man could not grow different crops from his neighbours. Also it was impossible to apply the new ideas of breeding while all the animals of the village wandered together on the common. Half the farming land of England was still unenclosed and one result of the discovery of better ways of farming was a speeding up of the process of

Was it im-
possible to
farm well
without
enclosure?

enclosure which had been going on steadily all through the sixteenth, seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. As in the sixteenth century (see Chapter 28), dreadful distress was caused to the poorest people in the country. In many villages it had been the custom for the poor cottagers, even if they had no land of their own, to keep a pig, a few geese, or even a cow on the common. When wages were low this pasture just made the difference. Usually cottagers had no absolute legal right to turn their beasts out, so when the common was enclosed they were usually given no compensation for what they lost. How bitter they felt about it is expressed in a piece of doggerel of the time

Enclosure
brings
Distress

Cottagers are
seldom
given com-
pensation

The law arrests the man or woman
Who steals the goose from off the common,
But leaves the greater villain loose
Who steals the common from the goose

Many of the smaller farmers lost also. For enclosure was accompanied by a movement for joining small farms together into large ones. There were more and more landless farm workers who had no hope of getting land of their own. How bad this was is admitted by Arthur Young, a man who believed that, for the sake of better agriculture, there must be enclosure. Drunkenness and unhappiness were general among such people.

If you talk to them about their improvidence [says Young] they will ask, 'For whom am I to be sober? For whom am I to save? For the parish? If I am diligent, shall I have leave to build a cottage? If I am sober, shall I have land for a cow? If I am frugal, shall I have half an acre of potatoes? You offer no motives. Bring me another pot.'

V

This was the bad side of the new agriculture, but there was a good one. Marshes were drained and reclaimed, land that had been barren became fertile, and there was a very real increase in the total amount of food. One statesman when he quarrelled with Sir Robert Walpole

began to experiment with such things and he became so much interested that he was nicknamed 'Turnip Townshend'. Lord Townshend's estate was in Norfolk. 'Norfolk?' Ah! that's the county where two rabbits fight for one blade of grass,' people would say. But Townshend read Tull's books and ordered tenants who did not care for new ideas to plough deeper, to use a horse drill that set the seeds in a row, and later to hoe between the rows to keep the weeds down. The results were crops such as had never before been seen in Norfolk.

Not long after, a young member of Parliament called Thomas Coke (who had taken part in opposing the American war) inherited a huge house and estate, also in Norfolk. He decided that if Lord Townshend had been able to work wonders, so could he. He too was at first bitterly opposed. In vain he showed the farmers that wheat could be profitably grown in Norfolk. They said it was ridiculous to plough such wretched light land, except with a rabbit yoked to a pocket knife. For sixteen years Coke showed that, by treating the light soil with clay, by having a different rotation of crops, using a horse drill and by breeding better sheep and cattle, Norfolk farming could, with prices as they were, be made to yield a splendid living.

All this time he tried to do more than set an example, he gave prizes, silver bowls and tankards, for the best sheep, or for something new in the way of a harrow or a horse-hoe. Coke took the greatest interest in showing his farm to anyone who was interested. Two farmers out of Kent and Sussex paid him a visit in 1792. He showed them his crops, let them measure his bulls, showed his dairy and his sheep,

three thousand acres without a fence farmed in a very capital style, yearling heifers fed on a very rich salt-marsh, and rams so uncommonly fat it would be vain for them to waddle away from us.'

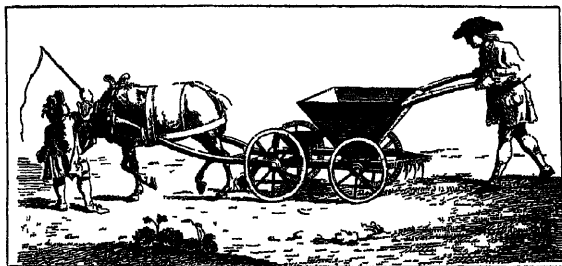
Mrs Coke would often ride thirty miles to show visitors round if her husband were busy.

Finally, the Norfolk farmers admitted that Coke was right. There had been an old saying, 'Throw your hat on to a ripe barley crop, if the hat rests on the top, the crop is good.' The local farmers—at last enthusiastic—told him 'Tis all hat barley since the drill came!'

'Hat Barley',

The Sheep Shearing

Every year at the time of sheep shearing Coke and his wife gave a feast in the huge house at Holkham. People came from far and near. The Emperor of Russia once



THE FAMOUS NEW HORSE DRILL

sent an envoy, Americans journeyed across the Atlantic, and English farmers flocked.

Now Coke all this time was serving himself. When he inherited the estate it brought him in about two thousand pounds a year. By the end it brought him in twenty thousand a year. Yet he had robbed nobody. Indeed, he had rehoused everyone on his estate, and eye witnesses all seem to have remarked on the fine horses ridden by his tenant farmers and the healthy, cheerful look of the children they met about. His was, in fact, perhaps the most respectable way of getting rich that anyone has ever practised. 'In Mr Coke,' said someone who made a speech at a sheep-shearing, 'I see a true patriot, compared to his, what are the boasted triumphs of the conqueror?'

POINTS TO BE NOTICED IN PART III

(1688-1785)

1 The Protestant middle class was now in power Trade and population in England were growing People eat more varied food and on the whole live better War with France began and, with intervals, lasted for nearly 130 years

2 Louis XIV sought to make France the most important nation in the world, but English, Dutch and German troops manage to defeat his armies

3 Under Queen Anne the Parliaments of England and Scotland united, and in the reigns of George I and George II 'Cabinet government' began

4 There were many great writers, some of whose works are well known to boys and girls to-day

5 George III tried to get back some of the power of the Crown and there were great orators in Parliament The old families of the Whigs and Tories divided the government of the country between them The growth in trade had led to the growth of a new 'junior' middle class

6 People began to study statistics and political economy English explorers and scientists discovered new facts about the world England established her Empire in India, but the United States of America shook herself free in the War of Independence

7 England had grown richer because of many new inventions, roads were improved, canals began to be important, and new discoveries were made in the best way of cultivating land

8 As for Parts I and II, the sources include the records of the government, the reports of speeches in Parliament, the private letters of various people and the plays and poems of the time In addition, there are many novels, pamphlets, diaries, newspapers and discussions of various problems written at the time Also many descriptions of England by foreigners

VOLUME IV
1789-1936

PART I

CHAPTER 45

HOW THE AGE OF STEAM BEGAN

(ABOUT 1765 TO 1820)

IF, in about the year 1765, readers of this book had been able to visit the shaftheads of certain tin mines in Cornwall, or of certain coal mines in the North of England, they would have seen something that was then considered to be little more than an oddity, or at most one 'useful contrivance' among many. Its portrait—taken at the time—is on page 2. It was a pump, and by its means the water was kept from rising in the mine. It looked clumsy, almost comic. It had a great wooden beam and a little fire-box and boiler and it stood, thumping and pumping in a shed, going wrong almost as often as it went right. It was called 'the engine for raising water by fire'. Savery or Trevithic invented the earliest of these beam pumping engines—(probably they both did). Newcomen improved it (it needed it). James Watt improved it again till it was recognizably a steam engine, and invented a device by means of which it would not only work a pump up and down, but, standing still itself, would turn a wheel. Stephenson set the engine itself on wheels and made what was recognizably a railway engine. The use of steam soon brought more rapid change than had ever yet been seen in the world.

Thumping
and pumping
in a shed

The work of men like Boyle, a scientist who studied gases, had made possible the discovery of this new source

The new Force of power The steam engine worked (and works now) by the force of the expansion which takes place when heated water becomes steam. Once the discovery had been made that it could be used to turn a wheel as well as to work a beam up and down, a hundred uses were



NEWCOMEN'S PUMPING ENGINE

found for it. The pace of change quickened as never before. There grew up new ways of spinning, of weaving, of travelling and of thinking.

The beginning of the 'age of steam' is often called 'the Industrial Revolution'. But, as will be seen in the later chapters of this history, the age of steam had not

done changing the world before yet newer forces were first discovered and then used. These were the force of an electric current and that of the small manageable explosions made by petrol gas. Faster and faster flew the wheels of change! The world is not yet used to these two new things, not used to flying, not used to speaking across the world, not used to being able to do so much by pressing a button. Man has not noticed that he has conquered nature and it may be that he will use these new forces for the destruction of mankind. But change is still going on more and more rapidly. Readers of this book—still in their teens—will, if the new forces are not used for destruction, see our age of electricity and the petrol engine change in its turn into an age of . . . Here we can only guess.

Such are the changes, manageably slow at first, and then hurrying after one another faster and faster, that have to be chronicled in the last volume of this book.

II

Now the reader may have noticed that in the last few 'Man' paragraphs we have talked about 'Man'. But of course these changes did not really happen up in the air to some sort of being whom we might call 'Everybody-rolled-up-into one'. Quite the contrary. Everything in the world happened, and is happening, in some one particular very real country to perfectly real families. Quite often during times of change one man's meat has been another man's poison, and a given change has sometimes made some families rich and brought ruin and slow death to others. Each country is, moreover, only one of several countries. Each of these countries was, and is, always at a different stage, and so each country 'caught' each new change at a different time and in a different way.

America, for instance, was slow at first because, when the first stage of the 'Industrial Revolution' was happening in England, the great work of clearing the ground for farming and of building new cities was still going on

At the next stage she caught up and passed the rest of the world, and even at first she was able to do something because she had laws that did not stand in the way and was ruled by a class—the men who signed The Declaration of Independence—to whom change seemed good

France In France things were the other way about. The land had been cleared and farmed for hundreds of years. What stood in the way of change was a forest of old oppressive laws and an old ruling class to whom change did not seem good. Germany was not ready. She was not a nation but a collection of tiny independent kingdoms, and for a long time changed very little.

Now the countries that did not start so soon had one advantage. They each began their Industrial Revolution after it was past the experimental stage. That is one reason why a German mining or manufacturing town to-day is cleaner than Manchester or Middlesbrough. So Britain, the country in which the Industrial Revolution began, suffered as well as gained from being a pioneer. It was in Britain that large quantities of things were first made in big factories for sale far away from the place in which they were made. It was in Britain that the steam engine was actually invented and first used.

III

The Cloth
Trade

When steam first began to be used there had already been important changes in the arts of spinning and weaving wool and cotton into cloth, and in the mining and use of metals. Some of the improvements in the cloth trade were made by men whose names have come down to us—John Kay, Lewis Paul, James Hargreaves, Samuel Crompton, Richard Arkwright—some by men whose names have been forgotten. But at first the effects of their inventions had been limited by the fact that their new looms and spinning machines were still worked by hand or, at best, by water power. Now, towards the end of the eighteenth century, the effect

of their improvements was doubled and trebled by the application of steam power

Working on the old 'engine for raising water by fire', James Watt, a Scottish engineer, first made the steam engine really important in industry. In the 1760's he made steam pumps far more efficient by using a separate condenser for the steam and by other improvements. In the 1780's he worked hard to get, instead of the simple up-and-down motion from the steam engine, a movement that would turn a wheel. At last he succeeded, and, from about 1790, the use of steam power spread in the textile industry, rapidly in cotton spinning, more slowly in cotton weaving and woollen spinning, very slowly in woollen weaving.

James Watt,
1736-1819



Iron

WEAVER AT A HANDLOOM

IV
The changes in the iron industry, however, had very little to do with steam. The mining and manufacture of iron, of course, were long-established trades, but by the end of the seventeenth century the mining of iron was in a bad way. The smiths who turned raw iron into goods made of iron had, quite early, learned to use coal in their forges and they were flourishing, particularly around Birmingham where coal was easily to be had. But the men who smelted the raw iron out of the iron ore, still could not get good results by using coal and so were still forced to use charcoal. But charcoal is made from wood, and by this time trees were very much in

Smelting the
Ore

demand for building both houses and ships, so the smelters could not get all the wood they needed. The industry of mining and smelting iron began to dwindle, and English iron began to give way to foreign.

Now this was obviously a bad state of affairs for the iron masters. But in the eighteenth century Abraham Darby and his son, by using a stronger draught and coke instead of coal, turned out a good quality of cast iron from their own blast furnaces. In 1784, Henry Cort patented a method of 'puddling' and rolling iron. With this new method pig iron could be satisfactorily made with coal. What followed was a growth in the iron and coal trades. Iron became much more plentiful and so was put to new uses. In making machinery, for example, iron could be used instead of wood, and for the first time bridges could be made of metal.

Iron
Bridges

For some time only a few people were affected by these changes. The iron and coal industries were not spread all over England and Scotland, but were concentrated in the parts of the north and west of England and lowlands of Scotland where iron and coal were dug. Again, though steam power spread quickly in the cotton industry, it spread slowly in the woollen and scarcely touched any other industry at all before 1830. This meant that the inhabitants of London and the other towns of southern England, for example, did not for some time feel any direct effects from these changes.

Good
Results

The good results that came to the country in general, when the change came, hardly need any explanation. By increasing the country's stocks of food, iron and textiles they made the country richer, and when a country grows richer then people are able to get the things that they need with less work. More people are left free to work at such things as science, and the arts. Some people who, a little later, began to wish that all these changes had not happened, forgot that each step in the 'conquest of nature' is valuable, forgot how good it is that machines should do the hard work of the world,

and how necessary to civilization it is that what is needed should be produced quickly and without waste of time. In a country like ours where there are no breadfruit trees and people must have clothes and homes, it is only possible for all the people to have leisure and be civilized when machines set them free from the hardest work. But at first the changes that were going on in Britain brought a great deal that was bad.

The evil results at this stage were soon to be seen in the coal industry, which grew very quickly and without any regard to the welfare of the men and women who hewed and raised the coal. Mining villages sprang up like mushrooms. They were not much more than lines of dreary hovels in which lived a growing number of men and women whose work was so hard that they became brutal. The villages were so new and raw there would often be

neither church nor shop. The men of the family generally began their work at about eleven o'clock at night, the head of the house going to the pit with his sons.

About three hours after [writes an observer] his wife (attended by her daughters, if she has any sufficiently grown) sets out for the pit, having previously wrapped her infant child in a blanket, and left it to the care of an old woman, who for a fee, keeps three or four children at a time, and who, in their mother's absence, feeds them with ale or whiskey, mixed with



WOMEN WORKING IN A SMALL COAL MINE

The section shows the shaft, with layers of coal and gravel, and the way people were hauled up before 'cages' were used.

A Miner's Life about 1790

water The mother descends the pit with her older daughters, when each, having a basket of a suitable form, lays it down, and into it the large coals are rolled, and such is the weight carried, that it frequently takes two men to lift the burden upon their backs, the girls are loaded according to their strength The mother sets out first, carrying a lighted candle in her teeth, the girls follow, and in this manner they proceed to the pit bottom, and with weary steps and slow, ascend the stairs, halting occasionally to draw breath, till they arrive at the hill or pit top, where the coals are laid down for sale, and in this manner they go for eight or ten hours almost without resting

Pit accidents There was always a chance that the miner and his family might be drowned or burnt Accidents were very common Explosions in the Great Northern Coal-field about the seventeen-sixties were so common that the *Newcastle Journal* was asked not to mention them

Scottish Miners It was naturally difficult to get people to work in such conditions, and in England miners were tied by long contracts and could be brought back by force if they tried to get away In Scotland their condition was worse, and the miners actually described themselves as slaves An old collier in 1841 said

Father and Grandfather were slaves to the Laird of Preston Grange, and after the works had stopped and we got licence from Mr Peter Hunter, the then tackman, we could not get work, for the neighbours kenned that the Laird of Preston Grange would send the sheriff after us and bring us back

They try to combine Again and again the miners rioted because, even with the whole family working, they had not enough to eat They were among the first workers to combine together to try to get better wages, and about 1780 one coalowner writes in alarm to another,

they all act in league and stand by one another throughout the kingdom

But they were not very successful in doing anything but frightening the authorities The story of Davy and the safety lamp told in Chapter 50, will show another stage in the history of mining And in Chapter 48 it will be seen that bad conditions were to be found in the cotton and woollen industries as well

CHAPTER 46

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION AND THE GREAT NAPOLEON (1789 TO 1820)

IN the second volume of this book something was said about how necessary it is, unless there are to be upheavals, for the government and customs of a country to change so as to keep up with new discoveries and with such things as new ways of growing food and making the things of everyday use

In France for the last hundred years everything had been changing except the government and the rights and habits of the aristocracy. A middle class had grown up just as it had in England. But the nobles still had some of the privileges that Henry VII had taken away from the English nobles. The middle class had never managed to get the government under their control through a Parliament, as the English middle class had done in the time of Charles and Cromwell. And although the French peasants had been more successful than the English in staying on the land as farmers instead of labourers, they had been much less successful in getting rid of feudal dues. In 1789 about a million of them were actually still serfs. Many others still had to labour certain days of the week on the lord's estate and most of them had to grind their corn at his mill (where they were badly overcharged), while they might not buy or sell property without paying a heavy fee to the lord. In Volume III we described how Voltaire—the most

France,
1689-1789

Nobles

Middle Class

Peasants

intelligent of all middle-class Frenchmen—had rejoiced to see how, in England, middle-class people could rise to the highest posts and control the government through Parliament. In France, Voltaire's books and those of another writer, Jean Jacques Rousseau, and their own growing commercial importance were making many such people believe that the methods of government in France were out of date—even the aristocracy were ceasing to believe in themselves. In fact all the most important classes in the State passionately wanted change. Only the Court and nobles resisted.

Impatience
of the
Middle Class

1789 At last the bottled-up desire for reform burst out into violent revolution. In the country, bands of peasants went round burning the records of the feudal dues claimed by the nobles, just as English peasants had done in 1381. In Paris the poor townspeople stormed the Bastille, the prison fortress in which Voltaire had lain years before. Clever lawyers and middle-class men seized the governing power from the King and nobles.

Storming the
Bastille

Since this is a history of England, not of France, it is not possible to follow here one of the most exciting stories in the world, the story of the six years during which the French Revolution lasted. It is enough to suggest that it was rather like the Peasants' Revolt and the Cromwellian wars rolled into one.

1792 After three years of debate and struggle the French King was dethroned, a Republic was declared, and, although the numbers have been much exaggerated, many nobles were executed. Then the peasants, the poor townsmen, and the middle-class revolutionaries soon began to disagree. When the Revolution began, they had not realized that they were really fighting for quite different things. There had been only one aim that they had all shared—to do away with the out-of-date laws and with the privileges of the feudal nobles. Once this had been done, quarrels were bound to break out. The peasants wanted the land of the Church and aristocrats and the abolition of their old feudal rents. Beyond that,

Fighting for
quite
different
things

they were not interested in other changes. The middle class wanted to set up the sort of government that existed in England. The poorer townsmen, led sometimes by members of the middle class, doubted whether middle-class rule on the English model would do them much good. In consequence, there followed a period in which different groups of revolutionaries struggled with each other for power, and often the losers were executed.

But there was one thing that united most of them again. This was the threat of invasion from abroad. Many French nobles managed to escape out of the country, and they began to ask the Austrian and Prussian governments (that were very like the old French government) to help them get control again. 'The Marseillaise', the French national anthem of to-day, was the marching song of the southern peasants and of the poor townsmen of Marseilles as they marched up to Paris to help save the new Republic from the foreign invader.

II

Our concern in this book is with how all this affected England. Up to 1793, four years after the French Revolution had broken out, England remained at peace, but then there came war.

Why did
England and
France go to
War?

At the beginning of the Revolution some of the most prominent Englishmen, among those who held progressive views, applauded it as splendid. Charles James Fox, a leader of the Whig Party, in the House of Commons, hailed the fall of the Bastille in these words. 'How much the greatest event that has happened in the world and how much the best!' A certain Tom Paine who was a citizen of the new American Republic and who was then living in England, wrote a pamphlet called *The Rights of Man*. In this he said that governments can be altered by the will of the people and must be carried on for their benefit, and that the people ought to be represented in all governments. This pamphlet circulated by tens of thousands. Paine had really suggested

*The Rights
of Man*

that the poor could use politics to make their lot better, and the idea was new and exciting. The government became alarmed and suppressed *The Rights of Man* and would have imprisoned Paine if he had not escaped to France.

Mutiny of
the Nore

There was, moreover, a mutiny in the fleet. English sailors were disgracefully treated, badly fed, badly paid, sometimes flogged to death, and for the most part were men who had not joined willingly but who had been 'pressed', that is seized by force and carried on shipboard. In 1797 the sailors on a number of ships struck and respectfully but firmly demanded reforms that the Admiralty were obliged to grant.

The French
win a
Victory

Abroad surprising events were happening. At first the trained armies of Austria and Prussia had been successful against the disorganized bands of armed men which were all that the French revolutionaries had been able to send against them. Then, when foreign armies threatened Paris, a new spirit was aroused. The peasants had got the land and it should be seized by no aristocrat or foreign tyrant! The French army chased the invaders well over their own borders, and declared that they would help the 'oppressed classes' of any nations that wanted to 'rise against their oppressors'. The victorious revolutionary government acted very severely indeed to the aristocrats who had 'conspired with the enemies of France', and in the 'September massacres' a great many innocent people were also killed.

What
William Pitt
thought

Now to Pitt (the son of the famous Earl of Chatham), who was the head of the English government, these facts looked something like this. The French are our rivals in trade and we were not sorry to see a Revolution which kept them busy. But now they are not being beaten, as everyone expected, by Prussia and Austria. They have just said, too, that they will support any people which wishes to 'rise against its oppressors', and there are people in England who consider this government oppressive. But just at this moment the Republicans in France have beheaded enough people (including the King and

Queen) to make their English friends less enthusiastic about them, so there will be little outcry against a war. War was therefore declared, and the long struggle between France and England was resumed

War with
France, 1793

III

Once fighting between the two countries had restarted, it lasted long after the French Revolution was over. That Revolution really came to an end in 1795, when the middle classes won the day and did their best to stop all further change. But the war went on, for in 1799, after the foreign armies had been driven out of the country, a young general seized control of the government and set about building up a great French Empire by force.

His name was Napoleon Bonaparte, and he is perhaps the most loved and the most hated man in history. He has been hated because for years his wars of conquest kept Europe a shambles. He has been loved because he did, as the revolutionary armies had promised, help people to 'rise against their oppressors', cleared up the mess left by the old feudalism, and was one of the best lawmakers since the days of Rome. In his resolve to try, as Louis XIV had done, to make France dominate the world, Napoleon shook every throne in Europe. But finally, in 1815, he was beaten by the English and Prussians and their allies at the famous battle of Waterloo and exiled to the island of St. Helena in the Atlantic Ocean.

Napoleon,
1769-1821

Napoleon was probably one of the greatest of all land generals, certainly greater than the Duke of Wellington who beat him. At sea, however, the French fleets were generally defeated, largely because the English Admiral, Nelson, was such a great commander. For many years after his time it was generally held that no one could beat the English fleet. In 1805 he won a tremendous victory over the French at Trafalgar, where he himself was killed. But, as a war is very seldom decided at sea, Napoleon continued to alarm the governments of Europe for another ten years.

The Duke of
Wellington

Lord Nelson

IV

Effects of the War Although England and her allies won in the end, the effects of the French wars on this country were serious. For one thing, fighting was by now a far more destructive and expensive business than it had been in the early eighteenth century. Napoleon's wars were not so bad as the Great War of 1914-1918, but they were much worse than those of the days of Queen Anne.

Poverty Much of the new wealth that was being created as the result of invention was not used to raise the standard of living at home. Instead of providing better food and clothes and houses, it went to provide cannon and ammunition and to pay men to fight. Since England was still a poor country, this was a disaster.

Another result was much interference with foreign trade, and this was particularly serious, for English prosperity was coming more and more to depend on buying and selling with the rest of the world. When Napoleon was at the height of his power and controlled most of Europe, he did all he could to prevent English goods being sold on the continent and forbade any of his subjects or allies to import them. When England retaliated by forbidding any goods to be taken to France or her allies without first being brought to England the Americans objected, declared war, and forbade the import of English goods into America. England managed to avoid ruin by smuggling many goods into Europe and by opening up new markets in South America and the East.

War with America Moreover, during and after the war prices changed rapidly, and to understand how inconvenient great changes in prices are the reader has only to think of what has happened since the Great War, or to remember what was said in Volume III about the sixteenth century in England. During the wars, prices went up rapidly and the poor found it more and more difficult to make ends meet on their wages. In particular, when enclosures took away their common rights, many farm labourers found it

absolutely impossible to live on their wretched wages and had to supplement them with poor relief. After the war prices dropped quickly. That made things rather better for men in work, but as prices fell it became so difficult to sell at a profit that many farmers and manufacturers went out of business and there was widespread unemployment.

v

One other result of the French Revolution had been to terrify the governing classes. They feared that there might also be a revolution in England, so, both during and after the wars, the government sternly repressed every effort that the mass of the people made to improve their condition. The government did not, of course, object to the condition of the people being improved, but they were so scared lest any popular movement should end in revolution, that they suppressed them all.

In 1795 laws were passed to prevent almost any organized opposition to the government. In 1799 Trade Unions were declared illegal. As time passed repression became steadily harsher, and after the war, when the trade slump was at its worst and when the spread of steam-driven machinery was causing much poverty and unemployment in the north, the government went to extremes.

In 1817, when a body of working men began to march from Manchester to London to present a petition for the reform of Parliament—a perfectly legal thing for them to do—they were arrested. In 1819, when a crowd gathered in St. Peter's Fields at Manchester to hear a man named Hunt speak in favour of reforming Parliament, the magistrates ordered a body of Hussars to charge them, some of the crowd were killed, many were injured, and Hunt himself was imprisoned. Instead of punishing the magistrates, the government congratulated them.

All this distress and repression naturally made great numbers of people discontented. Perhaps the best way of finding out what ordinary men were thinking and saying

Trade Unions
declared
illegal, 1799

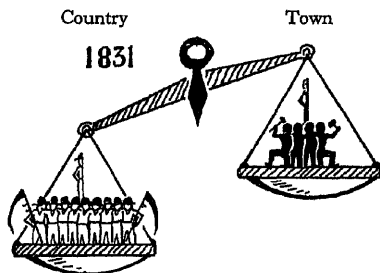
'Peterloo',
1819

William
Cobbett,
1763-1835

is to look at the writings of a farmer and journalist named William Cobbett. Cobbett himself was far too great a writer to be called an ordinary man. But his books and papers were read by hundreds of thousands of people. Because he put ordinary people's thoughts into words for them, he is of great importance to historians who try to disentangle the story of the past.

Nine-tenths
of the
people must
work on the
land

To-day, it is easy to see that Cobbett was mistaken in many of his ideas. He thought, for instance, that the factory system could not spread beyond a certain limit because 'the order of the world demands that nine-tenths



Each figure = 1 million

In 1831 there were more country than town people

Back to the
good old
times?

of the people should be employed on the land'. We know that now only a small fraction of Englishmen are engaged on the land (see charts on pp 140-41). He thought too that the best thing to do was to return to 'the good old times'. We know that the future was to be better than 'the good old times', and that in any case it is impossible to 'put the clock back'. But Cobbett tells us what many men were thinking in his time.

Here, for example, is the picture that he draws of the life of the mass of the people in England.

A very large portion of the agricultural labourers of Eng-

land, a very large portion of those who raise all the food, Poor people who make all the buildings, who prepare all the fuel, exist in ^{in 1823} a state of almost incessant hunger. The size of the people is diminishing from this cause. They are becoming a feeble race, they suffer from many bodily ailments caused by the poverty of their food, and their dress is fast becoming nothing but rags.

In other places Cobbett tells us what he and many other people thought of the various suggestions made for dealing with such a state of things. Here is what he said about those who tried to pacify the poor by giving them religious tracts about how poverty ought to be ^{Tracts} endured and how they would be rewarded in Heaven.

The fashion became to cry up spare diet, and to preach content with hunger. One of the tracts was entitled 'The Life of Peter Kennedy, who lived on, and saved money out of eighteen pence a week.' And this to his praise mind! I never considered empty stomachs and ragged backs as marks of the grace of God. The gist of the whole tracts was to teach content in a state of misery! To teach people to starve without making a noise!

Naturally, Cobbett was not popular with the government or with the rich. Once he was sent to prison, twice he had to escape to America, he was always abused.

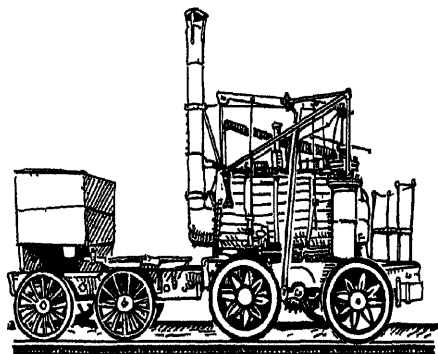
A remark or two seems necessary here to show the insinuation and, indeed, open accusation brought against all those who stood prominently forward in the cause of [Parliamentary] Reform. It was this, that they wished for confusion, for the annihilation of property, and for uproar and bloodshed. This has always been the charge against all those who have had the courage to take the lead in endeavouring to root out corruption.

Cobbett did not always write about reform. He loved the English landscape and could describe a wood just breaking into leaf, a summer hedgerow, a field deep in wheat, or bare after the plough, in a way which few other writers have been able to equal.

CHAPTER 47

THE WAR IS OVER (1815 TO 1846)

ALL this time scientists and inventors had been busy. Because there had been so many new inventions many things had changed too much to click back into place after the war was over. Enclosures had brought much



'PUFFING BILLY', THE OLDEST LOCOMOTIVE IN EXISTENCE
Built in 1813, he had about twenty years of useful life

distress in the Midlands, but until about 1810 the picture of southern England had still fitted into the old frame. There were more people, but they lived in the same places, the people of each village still had their church and some kind of doctor, and life was not all work. Among the country people many of the same old games and old amusements had been going on since medieval

Something still left of 'Old England'

times In some villages outdoor games, hurling, football, or stoolball had always been keenly played, and there was dancing in a barn or out of doors when the wandering fiddler came round In many parishes there were skilled bell-ringers and in most churches the music was played—not on a harmonium by the vicar's wife or by an organist—but by a band whose string and wind instruments were played by the men of the village The old market town had its shops, its weekly market-day, and annual fair All the people from round about met in its streets and there was fun as well as business Many of the boys and girls did not learn in schools, but they did learn to be skilful in some sort of work by being apprenticed to a trade For those who were sick or old, or for children who were left orphans, there was some sort of parish relief

But the people of the new, raw, dismal mining and manufacturing towns, which were now beginning to spring up in the North, often had nothing to correspond to the old village life The old games and fun had depended on everyone knowing each other and the old ways A town or village had been a collection of neighbours But the people of the new towns came from all over the place, they were a collection of strangers In the new towns there was nothing but the hard struggle to live In the older villages everyone had a few privileges by custom, but a mill-hand was a 'stranger' and had only the bare law as it stood in the Statute books He had to struggle for new rights and try to make a new kind of life or be worse off than his forefathers

Everyone was new to the job The owners did not know by experience when they were going too far The men and women who worked in the factories did not know which were the rights that, for dear life, they must try either to win, or to hold

No one quite
knew

II

There was some fine muddling high up too The powerful families of the Whigs and Tories (great-grand-

Stop and go
on

sons of the men who had got power in Cromwell's day and the grandsons of those who had kept it when William III came to the throne) did not see, as their great-grandfathers had done, that changed times ought to, and some day must, mean changed laws. At present they were terrified of anything new that might alter their comfort-



This building, part of a terrace of houses in London, is by John Nash, architect to George IV

able position, and were determined to keep things as they were. All these new ideas were no doubt a splendid thing in trade and manufacture, but there seemed to them no need for anything new in government. Government was a court-dress affair that could be very nicely arranged between the two Houses of Parliament and the Crown.

Kings and Queens
George III George III, who, at the beginning and towards the middle of his reign, had made a fight for power, had, as an old man, ceased to give them any trouble, chiefly

because he had suffered more and more often from fits of madness. His son, who later became George IV, was made Regent in place of the poor obstinate old gentleman. But he was a fashionable dandy who was easy to manage. For one thing all sorts of safeguards against the power of the Crown had gradually been slipped in by this minister and that. But the Regent did no more than grumble about the way he and his father were treated. A little rhyme was put into his mouth by some wag

Straight waistcoats on him
And restrictions on me
A more limited monarchy
Never could be !

When old George III died and the Prince Regent became George IV he went on with his fashionable life. When he in his turn died, his elderly brother, William, succeeded him.

George IV,
1820

William IV,
1830

Seven years later William in his turn was succeeded by his niece, the Princess Victoria, an attractive girl of eighteen, towards whom her ministers, especially her first Prime Minister, Lord Melbourne, felt exceedingly fatherly. For a long time she did not show the very strong character that she developed later, and was willing to take her ministers' advice in all big political questions.

Victoria,
1837

III

There were then three things that made the changes that were taking place in England even more difficult than they need have been. Two have been spoken of already. First there had been a war, and that had made people poorer, had upset trade and made prices fly up and then come down with a bump.

Things that
made change
more difficult

Second the government had been badly frightened by what had happened in France, and they tried to stamp out the attempts that working people made to adapt the laws and customs of the country to the new times.

The third was also important. In their panic lest

The 'Junior'
middle class
again

Who they
were

What about
Parliament?

change should bring about a revolution on the French model, the government would not change the laws even to benefit the one class that had grown richer and more powerful during the war. This class was what we have here called the 'Junior' middle class. Now the changes that had happened in England had changed nothing so much as it had changed families of this sort. The most vigorous, or at least the most powerful, people among them were no longer the doctors and lawyers, scientists and writers (though there were very good writers and scientists) but the people with money who owned and ran the new canals, mills and mines. They were the merchants who managed the growing foreign and inland trade, and the more prosperous tradesmen who lived in the great industrial districts that were growing up in Lancashire, the Midlands and South Wales. Every step forward in the growth of trade and industry made such people more important. As their businesses grew and flourished, so they became more and more determined to get a share in the government and to make the government's policy agree with their ideas. But, readers may ask, surely Parliament was already governing the country? We have already been told that Parliament represented the middle classes. Why should these manufacturers have to worry about getting control of the government? The answer is that the middle class had changed, and that Parliament, like all the other institutions in the country, was very much what it had been a hundred and fifty years earlier.

And so once more many of the people who were running the business of the country had little control over its laws. They had no representatives in the House of Lords, which consisted of big landowners, and very few in the House of Commons.

This was because most of the members sat either for counties, where only the richer freeholders had votes, or else for towns which had been important long ago but which had now dwindled away to nothing. Some of the

new important towns that had grown up around mills and mines sent no members at all. There were still M P's for Old Sarum, which had no inhabitants at all, and for places like Weobley and Bishops Castle, which had very few. There were none for the great towns of Manchester, Birmingham and Leeds. Naturally the new middle class wanted to have their say, and, this time, they believed that the best way of getting it was to demand that Parliament be reformed, and members given to the new towns.

No M P's
for the new
towns!

During and just after the Napoleonic wars the 'manu-¹⁸²²facturing interest' as these people were often called, could not do much. The government were almost as much afraid of them as they were of the working-class agitators who often supported them in the hope that Reform of Parliament would help them also. After 1822, however, trade began to improve, the panic of the government began to die down, the importance of the new manufacturers grew steadily greater, and they worked harder and harder for the reform of Parliament.

As long as the Tories were in power they could not hope for much success. For the chief supporters of the Tories were the landowners and farmers, who disliked manufacturers and feared that, if they got in, they would take away the protection which the government was giving to agriculture. Also the Tory leader, the famous Duke of Wellington, was so well satisfied with the existing constitution that he declared he could not possibly imagine a better one. Something, however, might be got from the Whigs. For one thing, they had always been rather more progressive than the Tories. Besides, they had been out of office for many years and their best chance of getting back and staying in power for any length of time, seemed to be to change the voting system. So, when quarrels among its supporters forced the Tory government to resign in 1830, the Whig government that followed it agreed to reform Parliament.

Manufacturers hope
little from
the Tories

The bill which they introduced does not seem at all

The Great
Reform Bill,
1832

drastic to us to-day The right of returning members was to be taken from the small decayed towns and given to the large ones that till now had been unrepresented In the country districts votes were to be given to wealthy leaseholders as well as to freeholders, and in the towns to all those who occupied houses worth £10 a year

In that way the number of voters would be raised from about half a million to about a million (out of a population of about twelve million), but no votes would be given to working men

Feeling in
the country
for Reform

Nevertheless the bill was bitterly opposed by the Tories and at one time it seemed doubtful whether it would pass. In the Commons, after a hot debate, the Tories at first beat the Whigs by 299 to 291 and a general election had to be held before the bill could be got through Even then, it was thrown out by the Lords, and the Duke of Wellington tried to form a government to take the place of that of the Whigs But the feeling of the country was too strong Although the bill gave votes only to the new middle classes all discontented people supported it in the vague hope that a new parliament might do something to make matters better Protest meetings were held in many places, there were riots, Nottingham Castle was burnt down, the people of Birmingham threatened to pay no more taxes, a run was organized on the Bank of England, and preparations were made for an armed rebellion In face of all that the Tories had to give in In 1832 the Reform Bill became law

The Bill
becomes law

Three years later the local governments of the towns were reformed also

IV

After the Reform Act the new middle classes were not, of course, in complete control of the government For one thing, they were still unrepresented in the House of Lords But now they had enough influence gradually to apply their ideas Their chief theory was one that they had been taught by the economists—Adam Smith



George Rowlandson tried in this drawing to make people see how dreadful it was in those days to be imprisoned for debt

and later writers This was what was called 'Laissez Faire'—'Let be' The State was to meddle with 'Let be' business as little as possible They thought that if the State did interfere the result was simply to slacken the

pace at which the country got richer This idea is held by many people to-day, and so it is worth while to see how it worked out more than a hundred years ago In England in 1830 the chief forms of state intervention in economic matters were two On the one hand, several million pounds a year were paid out in poor relief to invalids, children, old people, the unemployed and to agricultural labourers whose wages were too small to support them and their families This was what the State did for the poor It also did something for the farmers and landowners The price of corn was kept up by restricting the import of it from other countries

The Corn
Laws

The way in which poor relief was given was undoubtedly bad There was, for instance, a lot of bribery in many places and it was disgraceful that farmers should be able to avoid paying proper wages to their labourers by getting parish relief given to them But in some ways the New Poor Law that was set up in 1834 was worse For it was based on the principle that, in order to drive everyone to work for such wages as employers might offer them, the life of a man or woman on poor relief must be made definitely worse than that of the lowest-paid labourer who had a job In order to bring that about it was decided that relief should be given only in work-houses where—among other disadvantages—families were broken up and husbands and wives, parents and children were separated

Poor Law
Reform,
1834

There was, of course, really no sense in treating the old, the young and the sick, as though they were poor simply because they were too lazy to work There was also no sense in sending the genuinely unemployed man into the workhouse, for once there, he had little or no chance of getting a job In practise the new poor law proved to be too harsh to be thoroughly enforced But there was enough of such reform to cause great discontent and suffering among the poor To know what a work-house was like the reader should have a look at Charles Dickens' novel *Oliver Twist*

V

The other reform, that of repealing the corn laws which ^{The Corn Laws} kept up the price of food and the profits of the landlords, was by no means so simple. Both Whigs and Tories were agreed that the expense of poor relief ought to be reduced. But all the Tories and many of the Whigs strongly objected to any tampering with the corn laws, and all the members of the House of Lords and about four-fifths of the House of Commons still represented the landlords. In 1839, however, the 'Anti-Corn Law ^{The Anti-Corn-Law League, 1839} League' was founded by people who belonged to the manufacturing interest. Money was subscribed by the cotton manufacturers and the movement was led by two ^{Richard Cobden} men who were to become famous—Richard Cobden and ^{John Bright} John Bright. Lecturers went round the country preaching 'Free Trade'. Pamphlets flew about everywhere. At last, in 1846, when a failure of the potato crop brought starvation to Ireland, the Tories gave way and allowed corn to be brought in freely. Many other customs duties had been abolished just before this, so now the new middle classes had got what they wanted and state interference with trade had been drastically cut down.

In the next chapter the reader will see what it was that brought state interference back again.

CHAPTER 48

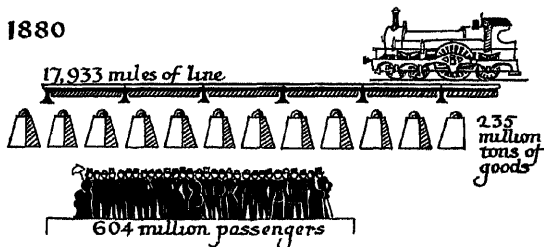
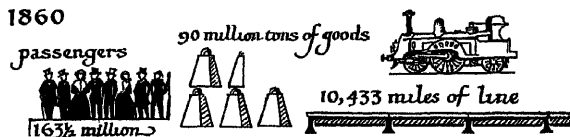
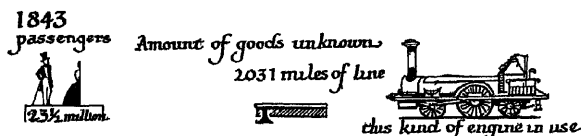
HOW ARE THINGS TO BE MADE BETTER? BY SOCIAL REFORM? (1815 TO 1848)

THROUGH the work of a great number of different inventors, of whom George Stephenson and Brunel are the most famous, it was found that the steam engine could be adapted for a use very unlike its first work of pumping the water out of mines. It began, that is to say, to be used for taking first goods, and then people, from place to place. On page 18 is a picture of the famous 'Puffing Billy', the first railway engine ever made. England was soon covered by a network of railway lines, and by 1843 a journey that had taken days could be made in the same number of hours. Coal, iron and building materials could all be transported much more easily on the new railways, and towns grew. Middlesbrough in 1825 was a solitary farm-house, in 1835 it was a town of 6,000 inhabitants, while all over the north of England the smaller towns doubled and trebled in size. Perhaps no one then foresaw the sort of growth shown on the charts on pages 29 and 125, but it was at any rate clear that the difficulty of transporting goods had been solved and that the factory system—which always means a lot of transport—had come to stay.

Meantime what was happening to the people of England? Were they pleased? It is clear that they were not, for there were riots everywhere. Sometimes there were riots against the new machines, and spinning

jennies and the new power looms were wrecked. Sometimes there were riots against the enclosures. In the next chapter we shall see, too, that some of the workers

What are these riots about?



This Chart shows the Growth of Railways (1) (see p 125)

did not riot, but set themselves seriously to discover how change could come about without such terrible suffering

The reader has seen that most of the new section of the middle class believed that everything would be

We have had
a lot of
Reform

all right if only Parliament was reformed and if the government did not interfere with 'the laws of supply and demand' These believers in 'Let Be' had their way in this when Parliament and the poor law had been changed and the tariff had been taken off corn Many of the workers, too, thought that a reformed Parliament and no Corn Laws would make things better But they did not

The new
Cotton
Factories

One of the worst problems of the time was the state of affairs in the new cotton factories They were regulated by no laws, and, because there was a great demand for cotton goods, and because it was more economical to work the new machinery continuously, many mills worked sixteen or more hours a day This wore out the men and women who stood at the looms and spindles What was even worse, many thousands of young children were employed just as they had been when the work was done in the cottages, but now their parents were not there to help them in any way Sometimes they started as babies at four years old, it was not uncommon for children of

Children of 6
work in
them

seven to work thirteen or even fourteen hours a day, and many were crippled for life by the strain and by the beatings which they received Most people thought that 'hands', whether men, women or children, should be left to look after themselves, but a movement grew up—led by Lord Shaftesbury—to do something for the children and, if possible, for the women

In 1819 a bill was brought before Parliament to make it illegal to employ children under nine years old in the mills and to make the hours of the older children a little shorter The cotton spinners of Warrington sent this letter to Sir Robert Peel, a member of the House of Commons, begging him to go on with his support of the bill

The Cotton
Spinners
Speak

We the cotton spinners and others employed in the cotton mills of Warrington take the liberty of addressing a few lines to you The principal cotton mills here work from half past five in the morning till half past eight at night, so that

the poor children are called out of bed at five, and it is nine at night when they get home, some of them being under six and many under eight years old. We feel exquisitely for these in the winter time, coming out of their warm beds, clothed in rags or half naked, through the cold frost, snow, winds and rain, many of them barefoot into the hot room where no air is admitted that can be prevented as it is injurious to the spinning of cotton.

The bill was passed but did very little good, partly because it still allowed children to be worked twelve hours a day and because there were no inspectors to see that the law—such as it was—was kept.

So for fourteen more years the same sort of thing went on. Look at the bitter caricature by Cruikshank on page 33.

About 1830 another attempt was made to improve things by law. The workers, as will be seen, were beginning to organize themselves and to make their wishes felt. The Tories, tired of the manufacturers' attacks on the privileges of the landlords, were glad to get their own back by attacking the bad conditions in the factories. So, after much debate and in spite of the outcries of some of the bad employers, who declared that they would be ruined, another act was passed. ¹⁸³³ No child under nine might be employed at all except in silk mills, no child under eleven might work more than forty-eight hours a week, or anyone under eighteen at night. This time inspectors were appointed to see that the law was enforced. ^{Inspectors this time} In 1844 it was forbidden to work children under thirteen more than six and a half hours a day (they had to go to school for the rest of their working hours), and women might not be worked more than twelve hours a day.

II

The factories, however, were not the only places in which conditions were bad. In the coal mines (as was ^{Mines} described in Chapter 45) women and children also worked for twelve or sixteen hours a day, the children starting

Children underground at eight or nine years old Their work was to open and shut trapdoors, to pull trucks of coal along the narrow passages, and sometimes to tend the engines used to raise the miners and coal to the surface Against the bitter opposition of the coalowners in the House of Lords, Lord Shaftesbury got passed a Mines Act forbidding the employment of boys under ten or of women and girls of any ages underground

III

The Towns One result of the changes in industry had been to attract people from the country to the towns and from the south to the north and midlands, so in any place in which there were new mills and mines, the existing buildings were soon overcrowded and new ones were hurriedly thrown up without proper drainage or sanitation or water supply

Speculators As soon as each coalfield was developed or new cotton mill was built, speculators bought up the land all round, and especially the road frontages Rows of badly built cottages, one or sometimes two stories high, were run up as quickly as possible and stretched in endless lines on each side of the road When more cottages were needed they were built back to back with the others Nobody planned the new towns, and the only object of the speculators was to crowd as many houses as possible on the least amount of land There were often no gardens in these new places and no open spaces in which children could play

How the
houses were
built

At night, or on a dark winter's morning, the grim prison-like factory, with its five or six tiers of windows, would be all alive with lights

All day within there would be the thump and scream of machinery and the thick smell of hot oil and cotton fluff, and the crowds of drab-faced, drab-dressed men, women and children—the mill hands—going to and fro serving the machines Outside were a smoke-laden sky and waste tracks where no grass would grow and tall chimney belching dirt Whole

families, father, mother and children would go out to work at the mills, locking up the house behind them

With such a way of living, and with such a way of building new towns, diseases like typhoid and typhus fever spread quickly

The more intelligent people soon became alarmed and, led by Edwin Chadwick, a civil servant, and Dr South-

Chadwick
and
Southwood
Smith



English Factory Slaves Their daily employment ...

George Cruikshank tried in this drawing to make people see that cruel treatment of children in cotton-mills was a disgrace

wood Smith of the London Fever Hospital, a movement grew up for improving sanitary conditions in towns. The reports of Smith and Chadwick and of the Poor Law officers made terrible reading, but the government were slow to act, until, to typhus and typhoid fever, there was added cholera which killed people by the thousand. Then action was taken, and in 1848 a General Board of Health was set up with powers to help, or in some cases to force, the town councils to take proper measures for sanitation and cleanliness. The Board was

A Board of
Health is set
up, 1848

extremely unpopular and was bitterly attacked by all those who made money out of the old and disgusting ways of carting rubbish, and of supplying water, and even of burying the dead. But it set on foot a definite improvement in town life.

CHAPTER 49

HOW ARE THINGS TO BE MADE BETTER? CAN THE WORKERS DO IT? (1815 TO 1848)

REFORMERS like Lord Shaftesbury really did want to make conditions better. But the Factory Laws did not improve things nearly as quickly as had been hoped, and in any case they could do nothing to solve the problem of unemployment. It seems difficult to see why, when trade was going ahead, there should have been anyone out of work, but in fact unemployment was often very serious.

For one thing, with big-scale production, and free competition, the series of booms and slumps from which we suffer to-day had begun. So one year, or even one month, the factory hands worked killing hours, fulfilling rush orders, and found themselves out of work the next, because too much had been made, prices had been falling and there was a 'glut'. Then, too, prosperity at that time shifted about from one part of the country to another, there would be too much work in one place and idle hands in another. Then, too, the different trades and even the different parts of one trade grew up unevenly. Some new discovery would make one process shoot ahead of all the others. Skilled men who understood only an older method would find themselves out of a job.

Some working men hoped a great deal from Lord Shaftesbury and those who worked with him, some from

How can you
stop wage
cuts ?

the Reform Act, and some from the repeal of the Corn Laws. But others got the idea that the workers would have to help themselves. Sometimes they tried intelligently and sometimes they were just bitter, desperate and violent. They had been treated badly and lived in shocking conditions, and they often hit out blindly, rioting and smashing the machines that had thrown them out of work. When they did this, their leaders were hanged or transported for life to Australia. But the more intelligent saw that rioting was not doing much good, and that above all, it was necessary for them to act together. They saw that if the men and women in one mill or one mine took lower wages, then the owner of the next mill or mine would say (quite truly) that he could not compete in the market unless his workers also took lower wages. If wages were to be kept high enough to buy food from week to week, then the workers themselves must combine to prevent 'undercutting'—that is, getting a job by promising to work for less money.

But till 1825 Trade Unions were illegal, and it was not till after 1832 that a really large movement began to be built up. This came about partly because of something that was otherwise bad, that is, the crowding of the population into towns. People who lived and worked close together began to consult each other about their problems.

A Big
Labour
Union

Now this story of the founding of the first big Trades Union in England, of the political demands that working men made and of the Charter with nearly two million signatures that they sent to Parliament, grew out of many currents and cross-currents. These protests and desires for something better, went through several different phases, and this stage of the story will perhaps seem more interesting to the reader if he follows it in the history of one man.

II

Robert
Owen,
1771-1858

The authors would, therefore, like the reader to take a look at a certain Mr Robert Owen. He was the son

of a small tradesman in a little town in Wales and learned to be a draper's assistant. When he was eighteen he borrowed a hundred pounds and boldly set up near Manchester as a cotton manufacturer. At twenty-seven he had made a name for himself, and at twenty-nine was a rich man and the managing partner of 'New Lanark', in the Scottish Lowlands, one of the biggest and best-equipped cotton mills in the whole of Britain.

Robert Owen's story, in fact, begins like any other tale of a poor boy who 'makes good'. He starts without a penny, he gains the respect of one employer after another, he reads and studies in any free time he has. At eighteen he is the head of his own small business and at twenty-seven he has rich partners, has married the boss's daughter, and is managing a thriving business. But Owen, if he had ever heard the phrase 'make good' would have asked, 'Make what good?', and would have answered without a moment's hesitation that what *he* wanted to do was to make science and progress good for the world and the world for them. For, while his older and richer partners had bought the mills at New Lanark for their junior to manage because they wanted to make themselves richer still, young Owen's idea was to manage them so that he made the world richer.

New Lanark was very much like other new factories of the time when Owen took over management. Decent families hated working in the mills, and so the inhabitants of the village were people who had been driven there by starvation. Out of well over a thousand 'hands' there were several hundred pauper children. These lived in barracks, while families lived in the mill cottages, a family to each room. The former owners had, however, been better than many employers. The children were at least well fed, their barracks were clean and they were given some schooling. But the hours of work were so long that Owen said that they 'became dwarfs in body and mind'. After he came no more pauper children were drafted there.

The Boy who
'made good'

About 1780

Made 'What
good?'

Decent
people fear
the mills

Owen begins
to change
things

Gradually he began to change first the management and machinery of the mills and then—out of what profits his partners would spare him—the life of the mill hands. He believed that people's characters are formed by the houses they live in, the way they have been brought up and the kind of work they do.

1805 Character is formed *for* and not *by* the individual, and society has now the means and the power to form well the character of everybody.

He was quite prepared for opposition from the mill hands—the people he meant to help. They had been badly treated, according to his theory their characters must have suffered, and he went ahead without any help from them.

A clean
Village

Soon each family had two rooms, and presently he got the workers themselves to appoint health visitors to see that the houses were kept clean. But his grand plans were for the education of the children, and, if they liked, the adults.

The
Children

The
partners are
shocked,
1809

So he put up lecture halls and schools, and, for the smallest children, he built playrooms and laid out gardens. The partners were horrified at this waste of their profits. But after a change of partners Owen managed to get his way. Here at New Lanark were the first schools in Britain where young children were taught out of doors in summer, taken for country walks, helped to understand their lessons by means of coloured blocks, pictures and maps, and above all where they were regularly taught to sing and dance. These model schools were for the children of all who worked in the mill.

After a while Owen became very popular and his clean village, his model mill and his schools were visited by people from all over the world. Most of the visitors admired what they saw. A few felt it was all too new-fangled, and among these was William Cobbett.

I never liked to see machines, lest I should be tempted to try to understand them. I constantly resisted the desire which

people had to explain them to me Being at New Lanark, however, I was rather curious to know whether there was any reality in what we had heard about the effects of the Owen 'feelosofy' Here I saw boys and girls carrying on what was called 'education' In one great apartment there were eighteen boys and eighteen girls, the boys dressed in Highland dresses, without shoes on, a tartan plaid round the body, in their shirt sleeves, each having a girl by the arm, the girls without caps, and without shoes and stockings, and there were these eighteen couples marching, arm in arm, in regular files, to the sound of a fiddle, which a fellow, big enough to carry a quarter of wheat, was playing in a corner of the room

Cobbett's
opinion

Cobbett, however, was one of the few who were not impressed

Owen first tried to give his message to the world by showing a sample and doing all he could to persuade other people to imitate it When the government voted money for the building of new churches, he begged that the churches might also be used as schools He begged other manufacturers, who came to see what he was doing, to realize that they could make a fortune without destroying a countryside and its people, he begged them to believe that what he was doing was a paying proposition For a long while Owen's ideas seemed to find favour with the government here, and even with governments far away For instance, the Tsar of Russia sent someone to inquire into what he was doing, and the American Ambassador sent copies of Owen's essays to the Governors of every state in America

Governments' seem
to listen

After making friends in this way Owen felt that he could pass on to the next stage and could demand that laws should be made to forbid the worst evils At this point the reader is probably asking why everyone was not convinced? Factory and mineowners may be greedy and want their dividends, but they are certainly not ogres who *prefer* the blood and bones of little children as a diet There was a perfectly simple reason for Owen's lack of success and never—though he lived to a good old age—did he realize it What he said about

Factory and
mineowners
not ogres

What was
wrong with
Owen's
Scheme?

it being possible to treat workers properly and yet pay big dividends was only true in the case of a new growing industry Under the competitive system, the time always



Robert Owen

ROBERT OWEN AS AN OLD MAN

Competition comes when many firms are competing in one field The buyer then always chooses to buy from the firm that can cut down prices lowest The manufacturer can only reduce prices by reducing costs, and in the long run

he can only reduce costs in three ways—either by paying his workers less, or by putting in labour-saving machinery and employing less workers (which means unemployment), or by cutting his profits and those of his shareholders. New Lanark, where profits and wages were both good, was not the sort of thing that—under the competitive system—could outlast a boom.

The reason that Owen never understood the unpleasant truth fits in beautifully with his idea that people's minds and characters are made for them by their experience. His whole experience had been in the prosperous quickly growing cotton industry—child of new technical inventions. He thought that all business was and always would be like that—with so big a margin of profit that it would be possible to pay both good wages and big dividends. Owen, it seems then, was both right and wrong. Right in thinking that New Lanark was the right sort of village, right in thinking that this was the proper way to bring up children, wrong in thinking that it could come about then and there, wrong in thinking it could be done without hurting the mill and mineowners, and therefore wrong in thinking that they would help him to bring it about.

The fact that Owen, with all his skill and kindness, never saw to the bottom of his problem is proved by the fact that he spent five years in America trying to found 'New Harmony' which was to be New Lanark, without the cotton mill. He did not realize that farming had not gone ahead as cotton spinning had, and that it was not yet possible for everyone to work only moderate hours at farming and yet live well.

While he was still hoping that the government and other millowners would one day agree with him, Owen began to work along other lines. There were thinking people among the working men themselves. If they would stand together they might get some protection against the worst evils of competition. With his help, there was formed in 1833 'The Grand National Consolidated Trades Union, 1833'.

Owen's ideas
had been
formed from
experience

New
Harmony'

One Great
Trades
Union, 1833

Union' There were already many small unions in the country, but now it was hoped that all who lived by working for wages would rally together Within a few weeks this big union claimed to have a million members The next year it held a huge 'Parliament' in London Members felt this to be a great achievement

Last week and this there have been two parliaments sitting in London The Trades Union Parliament is by far the most important [one of them wrote]

A slump make things difficult The Trade Union movement was not, however, successful during Owen's lifetime Two things made its growth slow The first was a trade slump which came soon after the great Union was formed and made employers bitter against it There were many strikes and lock-outs, and the Union soon had not enough funds to keep up the strike pay which was necessary if the men were to hold out The second was a smashing blow from the government

'The Dorset Labourers', 1834

Six young farm labourers who lived in Dorset were sent for trial because, in forming a branch of the Grand Consolidated Union, they had sworn a secret oath Actually the oath was quite harmless, but an old law said that secret oaths were illegal and the young men were sentenced to seven years' transportation to Australia There was intense feeling against the sentence, for conditions on the convict ships and in Australia were so bad that many who were sentenced to transportation died The leaders of the Union now found all their time taken up in trying to save their six unlucky members Owen himself headed a procession of thirty thousand people who came to protest to Lord Melbourne, the Prime Minister But the sentences were carried out, for the government had been frightened and meant this to be a lesson to all trade unionists Between them, the slump and the government brought the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union down with a crash For many years more, trade unionists had to rely on their old small unions

III

After the collapse of Owen's big Trades Union, many working men turned to politics, there grew up the movement known as Chartism. In 1836 the London Working Men's Association, led by William Lovett, drew up what they called 'The People's Charter'. In 1836 it they asked for votes for all men over twenty-one, equal electoral districts, abolition of the property qualifications for members of Parliament, payment of members, vote by ballot, and Annual Parliaments. If those could be got, they thought, the working class would be able to control Parliament and use it to remedy their grievances, though none of them were quite sure how. At the same time a man named Fergus O'Connor was building up a similar movement in the north. In 1838 they joined forces, and for the next ten years they tried to persuade Parliament to grant the six points in their Charter. 1838 to 1848

It was not difficult for them to convert working men to their ideas, and in 1848 they got nearly two million signatures to a petition in their support. But the working class had no votes and could not influence Members of Parliament. Since the big Trades Union had collapsed, big strikes were out of the question. A successful rebellion was made impossible by the strong army at the government's disposal, and besides, many of the Chartists thought it wrong to use violence. Some of the Chartist leaders were imprisoned by a government that was determined to stamp the movement out. By 1848 it was clear that nothing was to be got through Chartism and the working-class movement turned again to Trade Unionism. The Chartist Movement also fails

But though they failed in their two big attempts the workers had at least one important success. In 1844 the modern Co-operative movement was established at Rochdale. Though its beginnings were small the Co-operative movement is now large and important. There The Rochdale Co-operative 1844

are not only Co-operative stores in almost every town in England, but the Co-operative Wholesale Society is one of the largest businesses in the country

Besides this, in each town the 'Co-op' acts as a kind of club—where people can meet and drink tea or listen to lectures. Readers would find it interesting to try to find out the history of the Co-operative Society in their own town, to hear of its small beginnings and early struggles and also of the newspapers and central organization by which branches are now linked together.

Up to 1850, however, the position of the working class, in so far as it got better at all, was improved more because, after 1822, trade recovered and because of the work of such men as Lord Shaftesbury than by their own action.

IV

Women All through the centuries up to the beginning of industrialism, the women of each family had been im-



A NEW FORM OF SPINNING-WHEEL WORKED BY A TREADLE (1788)

portant, or at least necessary, partners in whatever was going on. The women of each family, except the very rich, had always spun the thread for weaving cloth and had cut and sewed most of the clothes for the family.

In each family the women baked the bread, made the soap and candles, salted or smoked the meat for the winter, brewed the beer, and made the cheese. But now these things were being made in factories. Poor women became factory hands and middle-class women found that they no longer had anything to do with these things which were now 'business'. Middle-class women, in fact, found that in this time of change they were losing their importance. They had had a share before, but they were in danger of being left out of the new outside activities. They began to want the right to earn a living, and, as before, to take a part in what was going on.

One of the first women to do public work was a Quaker, Elizabeth Fry. Quaker women had always been as free as men were to speak in Meeting, and to preach the gospel, therefore it seemed just as natural to Elizabeth Fry to set out upon the work of reforming the prisons as it had to John Howard (who had already done some of this very necessary work). The notion that women might write and be active in other ways came at the same time from quite another quarter. In France women had always had a good deal of influence. So among the ideas that came over with the French Revolution was the notion that 'Equality!' and 'Talents the passport to glory!' might perhaps apply to women as well as to men. Since it is often more difficult for a woman than for a man to leave home and since writing is work that can be done at home, the first women to make their mark at this time were writers. Later, women struggled to be allowed to do many other kinds of work and sometimes succeeded. But from this time onward there were in England always women journalists who made a name for themselves and a good deal of money, always a few good women writers and generally at least one who was a first-rate artist. But the work of the writers of this time must be considered with that of the scientists in the next chapter.

Elizabeth Fry,
1780-1845

John Howard,
1726-1790

French Women

Why women took to writing

CHAPTER 50

POETS, NOVELISTS AND SCIENTISTS (1789 TO 1848)

SOME extremely good books and a great deal of magnificent poetry were written during this time of change and commotion. People sometimes think of poets as very aloof people who don't notice what is going on round them, but the English poets of this time were as much moved and agitated as anyone else.

Poets were very much alive

For instance, it was the poet Blake—the man who wrote ‘Tiger Tiger burning bright’—who helped Tom Paine to escape to France when the government wanted to put him in prison. Wordsworth went to Paris while the French Revolution was going on. Shelley lived among a little group of philosophers who wanted ‘equality’ and rights for women, and was disinherited by his rich father for refusing to ‘behave like an English gentleman’. Lord Byron spoke against the cruel treatment of rioters and died helping to free the Greeks from Turkish oppression.

In the poetry that they wrote many of these poets seem to have foreseen something that was not noticed by most people then, but which is now a problem that we can all see, that is the wanton destruction of the beauty of the country when towns and factories spring up haphazard. A group of them went and lived on the shores of the lakes that lie in the lap of the mountains of Westmorland and Cumberland, and wrote about the beauty around them. They wrote in very simple words—fashionable people laughed at them for this—and Wordsworth made many

‘Rocks and
stones and
trees’

people who had never noticed such things before, see the exquisiteness of the first spring flowers, and the beauty of the streams and torrents that poured down the mountain-sides Boys and girls don't, as a rule, care much for Wordsworth's poetry—it is too simple, too much is left out—but grown people who love such things believe that Wordsworth was one of the greatest poets who ever wrote in our language Coleridge, another of the 'Lake Poets' as they were called, wrote magnificent poetry which is more to the taste of younger readers 'Kubla Kahn' and 'The Ancient Mariner' are two of the best of his poems He, like Keats and Shelley, who were all young and all writing at this time, wrote what is often called 'Romantic poetry'—that is poetry full of magic and generally with a tremendous swing in the metre

The reader probably knows the tale of Coleridge's 'The Ancient Mariner' A sailor, far out in the ocean, shoots an albatross and brings down a curse on his ship and all its crew For days the sun shines red and threatening out of a sky like copper

The water like a witch's oil
Bunt blue and green and white

and the vessel lies

As idle as a painted ship upon a painted ocean

The crew—all except the man who has brought down the curse—die of thirst

I look'd upon the rotting sea,
And drew my eyes away,
I look'd upon the rotting deck
And there the dead men lay

The moving Moon went up the sky,
And nowhere did abide,
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside—

Her beams bemock'd the sultry main,
 Like April hoar-frost spread,
 But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
 The charm'd water burnt alway
 A still and awful red

Taking all these writers together, the age was second only to that of Elizabeth for the verse that was written



SLAVERY OF WOMEN (1788)

The fashionable girls had no freedom or education Novelists as well as caricaturists pointed out how unhappy they often were

Readers who have a taste that way would be well rewarded by Keats' 'Endymion', for example, or his 'Ode to a Nightingale', or Shelley's 'To Night'

Jane Austen,
 1775-1817

Another writer of a very different sort who was one of the best of her kind was Miss Jane Austen She was a novelist who always wrote about one particular sort of

people, the rich, well-established, section of the middle class—country squires, clergymen, their wives and daughters. At first her stories may seem prim and dull to modern boys and girls, but really they are full of fun. The best one to begin on is *Northanger Abbey*. In this Jane Austen is laughing at the way in which young ladies were brought up and at the silly novels they read, and at the fashionable life in London and Bath where smart people went on holiday. It is impossible not to love Catherine, the heroine of the book. If any readers should take a look at *Northanger Abbey* the present writers hope that they will notice that its author is not in the least interested in any of the things that have been spoken of in this history as being the most important events of the time! Not a word does she say about the French Revolution or the war with Napoleon!

Other excellent novelists were Charlotte and Emily Brontë

II

In science the two greatest names of the time for England are those of Sir Humphry Davy and Michael Faraday Science

Davy was a great man not only because of his discoveries but because he made people of his own time see the importance of science. Most of the inventions that were changing the world had been made by craftsmen—spinners, weavers and engine-minders. Davy reminded the world that these inventors could not have made their improvements if it had not been for the work of scientists such as Newton and Boyle. He was a snob and very anxious to get a fashionable position in society, but he succeeded in making science as well as Humphry Davy fashionable Davy,
1778-1829

He makes
the world
listen

Like Newton, Halley and Hooke, Davy understood the technical problems of his time. Just before 1815 there had been many terrible mining explosions, in one only, ninety-two men and boys had been killed. A committee Davy and the
Miner's
Lamp

was formed to see if something could not be done to prevent such disasters, and Davy was asked whether he could devise some form of lamp or candle which would not set light to the explosive fire-damp gas found in many mines. Davy answered at once—

It will give me great satisfaction if my chemical knowledge can be of any use in an inquiry so interesting to humanity. If you think my visiting the mines can be of any use I will cheerfully do so.

Within a few weeks he had been to the mines where the worst explosion had taken place, had worked in his laboratory on specimens of the sort of gas that caused explosions, and had discovered something

Explosive mixtures of mine damp will not pass through small apertures or tubes, and if the lamp or lantern be made airtight on the sides and furnished with apertures to admit air, it will not communicate the flame to the outward atmosphere.

He realized that a wire gauze is really a series of very short 'fine tubes'. After three months of work Davy had ready the first miner's safety-lamp—the type that is used by thousands of miners to-day.

The importance of the discovery was—
He quite understood how important this new invention was—

The use of pit coal in Britain is connected not only with the necessities, comforts, and enjoyment of life, but also with the extension of our most important arts, our manufactures, commercial and national riches. by means of it, metallurgical processes are carried on and the most important materials of civilized life furnished. in providing the element of activity in the steam-engine, coal has given a wonderful impulse to mechanical and chemical ingenuity, diminished to a great extent human labour and increased to a high degree the strength and wealth of the country.

'To serve the cause of humanity' Davy refused to patent the invention because his 'sole object was to serve the cause of humanity'.

But alas, after the invention of the safety-lamp, more miners were killed underground than before. This was because the working of deeper and more dangerous seams

was now attempted. More men worked in the mines than ever before, and the danger from firedamp was only one of those that threatened them. The effect of his invention was not to increase the safety of the miners but to add to the wealth of the mineowners. Davy had put a new weapon into the miners' hand, the owners made them use it, not to increase their welfare but encounter fresh dangers. The lesson is that unless there are good laws, the best gifts of science may increase human misery.

What was the result?

III

The name of Faraday belongs to the history of something that is quite new in this story, but quite familiar to the reader—electricity. The names that everyone uses when speaking of electric current belong to the pioneers who among them discovered this great force. They thought of it at first as a scientific curiosity. It would be fascinating to tell here the story of the men whose names have been made familiar in words that everyone uses to-day—'Galvani', 'Ampere', 'Volta'. But since this is not a history of science only, we can only say a little about the greatest of them, Michael Faraday.

Electricity

'Volt',
'Ampere',
'Galvano-
meter'

Faraday, unlike his teacher Davy, did not like fashionable society. He had begun life as errand boy to a bookseller and was all his life a gentle, quiet man and a member of a small and strict religious sect.

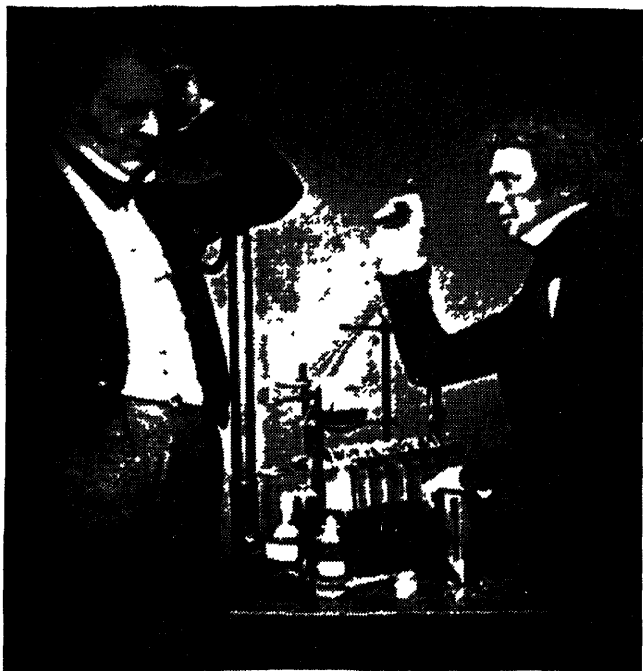
Faraday,
1791-1867

The work which he did was very varied. Up to now the discovery which has had the greatest practical results is that of how to produce a strong electric current. The strongest current then known was the sort which is now used for electric bells—made by plates of metal in a wet cell. Faraday for the first time induced a current to flow between a strong magnet and a moving coil of copper wire. He himself used this new force for his work in chemistry, but all the great dynamos that light cities and drive trains and trams to-day are made on the principle which Faraday discovered. His work had also great scientific importance, and modern scientists consider

Principle of
the Dynamo

1825-1830

that he was one of the chief ancestors of the theory of 'Relativity' which Einstein gave to the world in our own lifetime



FARADAY (ON THE RIGHT) EXPLAINS ONE OF HIS EXPERIMENTS

IV

Many new scientific facts were being discovered in France and Germany, particularly about the way in which the human body works, and about such processes as digestion. Men like Baron von Humboldt were also

studying animals that had been known to scientists only Humbolt,
as oddities and men were learning many new things about 1759-1859
the world. It was Humbolt who first suggested that
volcanoes may be cracks in the earth's crust through which
a central fire spouts. Geologists began to consider such
problems as the age of the earth and its rocks and soil and
the meaning of the fossil bones and shells found in them.
These fossils turned out to be some of the clues from
which it was possible to tell the story of men and other
creatures who lived long before there were any records in
writing.

In 1831, Sir Charles Lyell published the first of the Lyell writes
three volumes of *Principles of Geology*, in which he on Geology,
gathered together the work of many other geologists. He 1831
suggested that the surface of the earth is still being
moulded by the forces (water, frost and volcanic action)
that have produced the hills, plains and river valleys that
we know. This book is memorable partly because the And Darwin
first volume was taken on board the small survey ship reads
Beagle by a young naturalist who had been engaged to sail
with her on her five-year voyage round the world. This
young man was Charles Darwin, and his story belongs to
a later chapter.

POINTS TO NOTICE ABOUT PART I

1 Britain, which had been mainly an agricultural country, was
more and more rapidly becoming a great manufacturing country.

2 This was made possible by new inventions based on new
scientific discoveries, and particularly by the use of steam power.

3 At the same time changes in agriculture were driving many
people off the land and these, together with craftsmen who had
once worked in their own homes, became factory hands and
lived in new towns that grew up round the mills.

4 Although many people were scarcely affected by these
changes, and although the country as a whole became richer,
they brought suffering to many of the poor.

5 The French Revolution made the government frightened
of political change. Movements for the reform of Parliament
and for trade unions were declared illegal.

6 In their fear of change the government opposed the manu-

facturers as well as the working men But in 1832 Parliament was at last reformed so as to give the manufacturers more power They then got the Poor Law tightened up and, after ten years of agitation, the Corn Laws were repealed

7 Meanwhile men like Lord Shaftesbury were slowly persuading Parliament to limit long hours and bad conditions in mines and factories

8 Working men tried to improve their conditions by building up trade unions Led by Robert Owen they tried to form one big union

9 Women tried to take their place in the new kind of life but found much opposition

10 The poets were interested in politics, and in literature and art there appeared a new interest in country beauty There were many good novelists, but they were less interested in politics than the poets

11 In science, Humphry Davy and Michael Faraday did research which has borne much fruit

12 There are many sources from which historians learn about this period There are the official records of the government, speeches made in Parliament and elsewhere, and the reports of royal commissions set up to investigate various problems There are the autobiographies, diaries and letters of the people of the time, poems, plays, novels, newspapers, and the writings of reformers like Cobbett, Owen and Lord Shaftesbury

PART II

CHAPTER 51

THE PROSPEROUS VICTORIANS

(1848 TO 1875)

THERE were so many political earthquakes in France and 1848, in other countries that 1848 was called 'The Year of The Year of Revolution', and it seemed as if the stage was all set for Revolution a really big upheaval in Europe. But in England, with owners and workers facing each other in one strike or lock-out after another, something happened which made both sides put off the conflict.

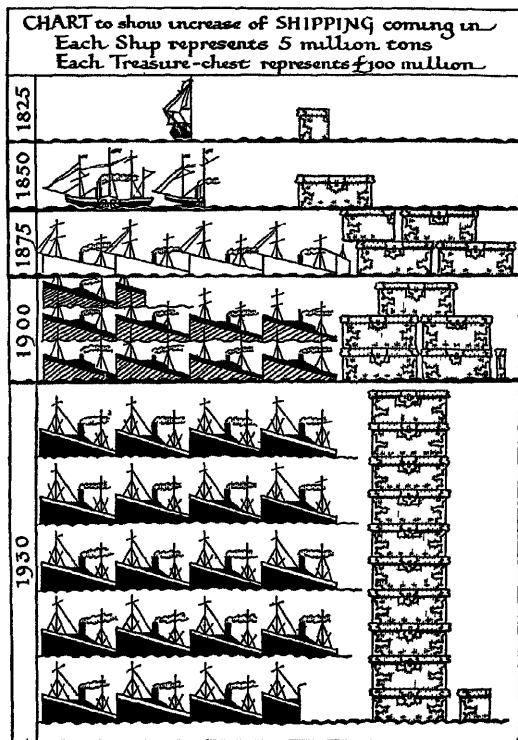
What happened was a trade boom in which money Boom Years was so quickly made that middle-class people began to think that good times were here for ever. Even the poorest began to believe that, with so many fortunes being made all round them, their turn would surely soon come. And in time rising wages really did make working-class conditions better.

During these years everyone, whatever their private worries, shared the cheerful feeling that everything was going ahead, and the calming feeling that 'whatever is right'. Business and trade were flourishing as never before in the history of the world. Even the poorest dreamed of a sudden rise to riches.

Though poor families still lacked many of the things that they needed for a healthy and happy life yet at least they felt hopeful.

The reader must try to imagine how it felt to live How it felt

during this first of all the great booms All former slumps were forgotten, nobody thought there would be



Compare this chart with the 'export' and 'import' charts on pages 74, 75, and 94, 95 and with the charts showing the growth of population on pages 70 and 140, 141. Never before had there been such a time of rapid change

another, and for a whole generation the country went on getting richer and richer. The poorest people were not

so much interested in trying to get better laws because, even as things were, life was improving. A weekly newspaper (*The Spectator*) put it like this: 'The country is once more getting rich. The money is filtering downwards to the actual workers.'

In middle-class families 'Papa's' word was law. For Papa—the head of the family—could surely not be wrong about anything since under his care, 'The Business' (it was probably a cotton mill, a bank, an iron works, or a railway company) was going so well. He must be a wonderful man! What was so splendid was that the country was being governed by people with very much Papa's ideas—by ministers who had a proper respect for business, and by a House of Commons that pulled them up if they forgot 'the manufacturing interests.' Papa approved of this, and of Queen Victoria who was now married to an excellent German, Prince Albert, and was busy bringing up a family of children.

Papa approved of all the virtues that are necessary for success in business. That is to say punctuality, civil manners, thrift, hard work and respectability. He liked his boys and girls to have a decent education and he liked them to be happy. But they must go to bed early so as to be ready for the morning, and they must never think that they knew best. The boys must be ready to carry on their father's work.

On the other hand, Mama's and the girls' business was to look charming and to see that, in the house, everything went on year after year in an orderly routine. There must be plenty of boiled eggs and muffins for breakfast, and Mama with her lace cap and ribbons (and if possible a smile) must be there to pour out the tea. Then with her husband away at 'The Business' she could jingle about the house with her keys seeing that the little girls practised scales on the piano and that the servants did not steal the tea or the sugar, or she could order the carriage and go out shopping.

At about five o'clock the head of the family came home, Dinner

and there had to be a big roast joint for dinner which he carved for them all After dinner all gathered in the



QUEEN VICTORIA WALTZES WITH PRINCE ALBERT
Notice her dress and his Hussars uniform

drawing-room to drink tea and then (unless Papa was tired and preferred to go to sleep) one of the girls would play and sing Or perhaps he would read aloud while

Mama and the girls did a little embroidery (look at the picture on this page)

Obviously all this was very nice indeed for the head of the family, and Mama and the children probably minded much less than the reader might suppose. For after all they were all so very comfortable. There were jewels and a nice carriage for Mama, ponies for the boys and their sisters, plenty of servants and solid food, velvet

Did Mama
and the
children
mind?



IMAGINARY PICTURE OF A VICTORIAN FAMILY SITTING IN THE DRAWING-ROOM AFTER DINNER

Compare the furniture and dresses with those belonging to the modern family on page 153

waistcoats for the boys, silk dresses for the girls, a new suite of rosewood furniture for the drawing-room and seats at the Pantomime at Christmas. People feel grateful for such things. Unless he happened to be an absolute ogre it was natural genuinely to admire and want to serve the man who worked hard to get and give all these good things. Success breeds success, and other poorer families who had only a small share yet felt that the prosperous business people could not be wrong

II

Of course, things did not change all in a moment from the restlessness and uncertainties of the first half of the century to the settled prosperity of the second. Gradually, but all the while, new inventions were being made and new uses were being found for machinery that already existed. Perhaps the most important of all the new developments was the improvement in transport. Readers can see from the chart on page 29, how quickly the railways of Britain were growing. They must then imagine how quickly the iron and coal and steel industries must have gone ahead with this huge demand.

Growth of
railways

The same sort of thing was happening—though rather more slowly—in America and in Europe. Now, since Britain had been the first country in which iron, steel and coal were produced on a large scale, this meant that at first she was able to sell such things as rails and coal to other countries, and since Britain had also been the first country to make things like cotton and woollen cloth cheaply and in great quantities, the new railways carried her goods to many new markets in British waggons over British rails.

Increased
demand
speeds up
invention
everywhere

As the demand for goods increased, invention was speeded up and important new methods were discovered in iron and steel making, in corn milling and in engineering. Sewing machines and machines for making boots were invented in America and soon adopted in Britain. All sorts of new uses were found for coal gas. Not only did Papa read by gas light, but he lit his factory with it and persuaded the town council to use it for lighting the streets.

Gold
California
and
Australia

Another important thing that made for prosperity was the discovery of gold, in California in 1848, and in Australia three years later. Men rushed to the workings and soon there was more gold money than ever before. It has already been explained earlier in this history that, as the amount of money in a country increases, prices

usually rise. If they rise very quickly, as they had done in the sixteenth century, distress is often caused. But if they rise slowly, as they did now, they give the manufacturer just the encouragement that he wants without hurting other people too much. After a manufacturer has bought his materials, some time has to pass before his goods are ready for sale. If, between the time when he bought his metal or his cotton and his being ready to sell his bedsteads or his cloth, prices have risen a little, he will be able to make a little more profit than he had hoped. His difficulties begin when his workers—also because of rising prices—want more wages. But now new markets were opening so fast and trade was so good that the owners, when pressed by the men, were willing to raise wages a little.

There was another thing that prevented discontent. A movement was begun to provide what are called social services—such things as proper drainage and water supply for all the inhabitants of a town and, above all, schools for the children of the mill hands and miners. There will be more to say about such things in a later chapter.

Rising prices
help the
manufacturer

Wages ?

' Social
Services '

CHAPTER 52

ARCHITECTURE, THE OTHER ARTS, AND SOMETHING NEW IN SCIENCE (1848 TO 1875)

'Papa'
understood
scientists
but not
artists

AN imaginary 'head of the family' was spoken of and the authors suggested that, because they were being so successful, everything in the country had to be just what middle-class business men thought was right and proper. These men liked their daughters to be 'ladies', they liked their houses to be Gentlemen's Houses. They liked new inventions—they might be useful—and they could see that there was something in science. The business men of the time felt kindly to scientists, for they understood and respected the slow working out of something that had been a brilliant guess.

Why? But with artists it was different. In the arts, virtues such as thrift and punctuality and even hard work do not count so much. Artists and actors, writers and musicians are rather puzzling creatures. The middle-class men who ruled England were not sure what they wanted from the arts, or how artists ought to be judged. They had been too busy to know much about 'culture' and were apt to ask a painter to paint them a picture, or an architect to design them a house, because he had the virtues that they understood—because he was a 'good man'—punctual, respectable and a kind father. This influenced the best business men. Some of them chose artists for a worse reason—just because their work was fashionable.

Almost for the first time in history, a prosperous period now brought not good, but bad art. On the whole, architecture and painting were worse in England (and perhaps in the world in general) than they have ever been before or since. In the case of architecture this was a world-wide disaster. Unfortunately the time when architecture was at its worst, was a time of tremendous building activity, because it was a time of great prosperity. The consequence is that almost every town that the authors have ever visited, Warsaw, Prague, Berlin, Paris, London, Manchester, Philadelphia (and many others that they have not visited, such as Melbourne and Bombay), contain far more bad buildings than they do good ones. This is because most of the buildings in them were put up at this time.

The reader may perhaps (quite properly) ask why the writers make so sure that Victorian buildings are bad? Such a sweeping statement certainly needs some support. All those who care for architecture to-day agree that a building cannot be good unless (1) it keeps out the wind and weather, (2) suits the purpose for which it was built. On the second point most Victorian buildings fail badly. For example, in London a Victorian architect named G. E. Street built large new Law Courts. He made the windows so small, and constructed his building with so many sloping roofs that to-day, all over the building, artificial light must often be used even at midday and in summer. Again, most lovers of architecture would agree that the style of a building should express the materials of which it is built and the purposes and ideas of the people who will use it. But the Victorians all copied. For seventy years buildings were put up in imitation of Scottish Baronial Castles, Venetian Palaces or French or Italian Renaissance houses, though they were built of new materials, served new purposes and were bigger and higher than the buildings they imitated. No new styles were evolved, there were only bad copies of old ones. So the factories, schools, houses, shops,

For the first time prosperity brings bad art

Are these buildings really bad?

Reasons

Fitness for purpose

The style should mean something

The Victorians copied

warehouses, theatres, bridges and gas works of the time nearly all appear in fancy dress

The fact was that people's attitude to architecture was wrong. What they wanted was not a beautiful or a suitable building, but one which was correct, or looked expensive. They wanted to show off, and got what they deserved. Unfortunately we, their more or less innocent descendants, have inherited their towns

II

The effect of the business-man's taste on literature was not quite so bad, and many notable novels were written and much poetry

Thackeray,
1811-1863

But literature did suffer because so many subjects were 'not nice'. So Thackeray, great novelist as he was, felt himself cramped because his readers could not be expected to approve of a character unless he or she were perfectly respectable. His most famous novel, *Vanity Fair*, suffers from a heroine who has all the virtues that 'Papa' thought a lady ought to have. To most modern readers Amelia appears to be an uninteresting goose. Dickens's women—except the bad or funny ones—are just as dreary. With all the other talented writers of the period—Trollope, George Eliot, Mrs Gaskell and many others—the reader is apt to feel that, out of respect for the public, the author is not quite drawing people as he or she really saw them. Many people think that this is why, though there were many writers of great merit both in England and America during this time, there was not one who comes up to certain writers of the same epoch—Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, Zola, Balzac, to name only a few—who were living and writing in countries where 'Papa's' virtues had not yet ousted all the others.

Charles
Dickens,
1821-1870

Not so great
as—

Poetry
Tennyson,
1809-1892

In poetry the results of respectability were also unfortunate. Tennyson and Browning (to name only two) were very great poets who wrote much poetry of which only a little is great. Boys and girls to-day do not, as

a rule, like their work very much, but younger readers would like Browning's 'Pied Piper' and 'How they Brought the Good News', and older readers should try some of Tennyson's shorter poems, such as 'Come Not when I am Dead' and 'Tears, Idle Tears', and Browning's poems about the Renaissance in Italy

III

But, in an atmosphere which came near to killing the arts, the sciences flourished. Among so many great men of science it is hard to make a choice, but perhaps to-day Charles Darwin is the most interesting. He has already been mentioned twice in this history. First, in Volume I, as giving one of the first clear descriptions of a primitive people, and then again in Chapter 50 as the young naturalist who started off for a five-years' voyage round the world.

He is famous because he worked out a new theory about all known kinds of plants and animals. Some people call Darwin 'the Newton of Biology', but he was also the Copernicus and the Galileo. These two made people realize that the earth was only one of many spinning planets. Darwin made people for the first time see 'Man' as only one of all the innumerable forms of life on the planet Earth. Other scientists of his day were coming, or had come, to believe something of the sort, but Darwin worked out the proofs.

When Darwin, in his voyage round the world, saw the immense variety of living creatures in South America, Australasia and Africa, he began to wonder if every sort of beast, bird, fish and insect had really been specially created as most people then supposed? On one day (in Uruguay) Darwin, with his own hands, collected sixty-seven distinct kinds of small beetle and thirty-eight kinds of spider. Why should so many kinds of creature have been created so nearly alike?

All this while he had been reading Lyell's book. Lyell told how geologists believed that the earth must be

Charles
Darwin,
1809-1882

Darwin
suggested
some
startling
ideas

What he had
seen

What he had
read

very much older than had been supposed, and that parts of it had once been inhabited by fish, reptiles and birds unlike any creature now living. Suppose, thought Darwin, that, in the course of thousands and millions of years, living creatures had changed—evolved? Might that account for the hundreds and thousands of different kinds of living and extinct creatures? It was not till he had worked for fifteen years at the material he had collected that Darwin felt certain enough of his proofs to publish his theory.

The Origin of Species, 1859 In the book that he wrote, *The Origin of Species*, Darwin suggested that each kind of fish, bird, insect and beast had been very gradually 'evolved' from some other, and usually simpler, kind. The living creatures found now, represented he believed 'the survival of the fittest', their fitness being proved in a long 'struggle for existence' with other creatures. Those kinds that had managed to survive had done so by becoming adapted to the places in which they lived.

This is more or less what scientists believe to this day, only they have been able to improve on Darwin's ideas of how so much variety sprang up. Work has been done on the problem of *how* young creatures inherit from their parents, and the new work has made the general truth of the evolutionary theory certain though it has corrected many of the details.

What about 'Man'? *The Origin of Species* made a great stir among ordinary people as well as among scientists. Those who read it saw that the consequence of believing Darwin's proofs of Evolution was to believe that man was not, as most people had supposed, a being quite unlike any other—a sort of inferior angel. Man's wonderful brain and strong delicate fingers had been evolved in the course of the struggle for existence just as had the speed of the deer or the hedgehog's prickles. Some people welcomed the idea, to some it seemed horrible, but few people could find any way of disproving Darwin's carefully collected and beautifully arranged evidence. The reader

might enjoy a fuller account of Darwin, his adventures and the sort of man he was, given in books mentioned at the end of this history

IV

Great advances in medicine and in surgery too were made during this time. One was the use by surgeons of anaesthetics, another was the discovery that many diseases of man and beast are caused and carried by minute living things—germs. Medicine and Surgery

Since the time of Newton it had been known that living creatures existed that were too small to be seen by the naked eye. By a series of beautiful experiments a French scientist, Louis Pasteur, proved that wine and beer ferment and bread rises, through the action of tiny plants which had long been known by the name of yeast. Though many of the tiny creatures that are carried by the air or on our hands and clothes are harmless to man and to the larger plants and animals, he showed that some of them are carriers of disease. Further experiments were made, especially by a German named Koch, that proved that germs do cause not only many illnesses, but also the swellings and redness of a cut or a wound that has become septic or 'festered'. These germs can be, and were, carried by the air or by the hands and instruments of doctors. Germ theory of Disease
Pasteur, 1822-1895
Koch, 1843-1910

In those days wounds caused by operations, even quite simple ones, almost always did fester, for cleanliness was not considered necessary. So great was the loss of life from septic wounds that surgeons never ventured to operate on the digestive organs. If he were let alone the patient who had swallowed a button or a penny might recover, but if he were operated on he was almost sure to die of blood poisoning. A broken arm or leg, if there was a wound as well as a broken bone, was quite likely to cause the patient's death. When Pasteur discovered that what made wounds fester was the presence in them of germs, the discovery was used by Joseph Lister, a Lord Lister, 1827-1912

surgeon working in Scotland. He found that if the germs were killed, or better still kept out, an operation wound would generally heal quickly and cleanly and the patient would recover.

Anaesthetics But in surgery, Pasteur's and Lister's great discoveries would have been much less valuable if, about the same time, it had not occurred, first to a dentist in America (W. T. G. Morton) and then to doctors, to use in their work something which had been discovered by Humphry Davy and treated as a curiosity. This is the fact that certain gases make the person who breathes them unconscious and unable to feel pain, but that when he begins to breathe ordinary air again he is none the worse. Among these gases are 'laughing gas' and the vapours of ether and chloroform. When his patient could be made unconscious it was at last possible for the surgeon to operate quietly and slowly and without inflicting torture.

Hospitals had been dreadful places Before the discovery of how to use anaesthetics and of the 'germ theory' of disease, hospitals were dismal, almost hopeless, places. The reader will get an idea of how horrible they were from the fact that Charles Darwin was to have been a doctor, but refused to finish his training because of the terrible sights and sounds of the hospital in which he was a student.

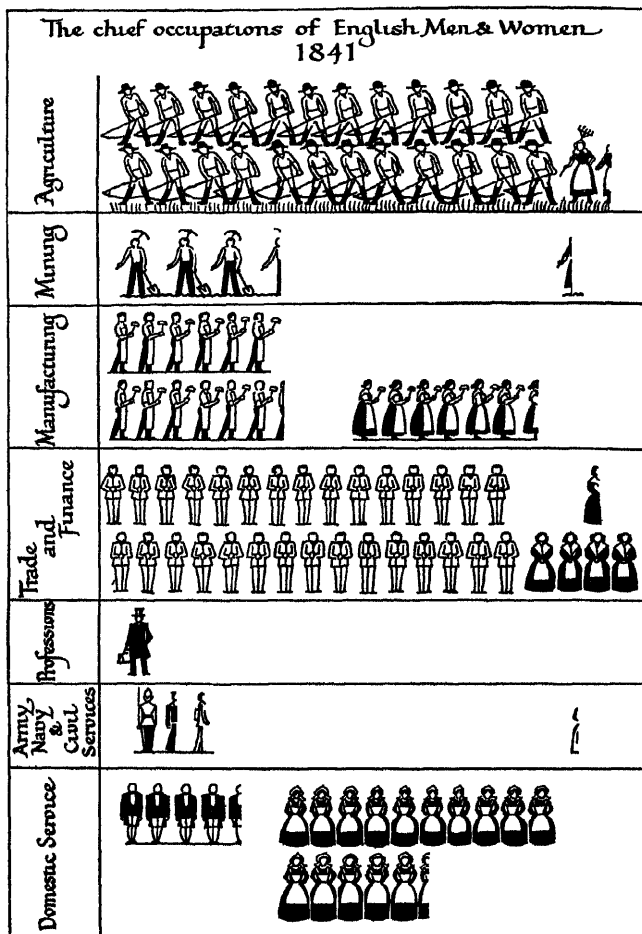
Public Health Advances were made too in what is called 'public health'. The towns of England were still ugly, still crowded, still canopied with smoke, but at least they now began to be properly drained, and supplies of clean drinking water began to be provided. As late as 1863 there were places in Islington so insanitary that children always died within two years if born there or taken there with their families. But gradually, spurred on by the reformers and by the fear of cholera, the town councillors made the towns of England the healthiest in the world. Judged by modern standards, however, things were still bad even as late as 1881.

CHAPTER 53

BETTER LIVES FOR GROWN-UP
PEOPLE AND CHILDREN
(1848 TO 1875)

WITH the boom in trade, and with more knowledge of the laws of health and disease, the population grew rapidly (look at the chart at the end of this book) This growth, of course, brought its own problems The badly planned towns became bigger and more crowded It became more difficult for town children to get out into the country But nevertheless the lives of the great majority of men and women were better than those of their fathers and mothers Wages were higher Unemployment was less The better-paid skilled workers were often able to save and to put their money into Savings Banks, or into Friendly Societies that would help them when they were ill, and the new Co-operative Movement grew (see pages 43 and 44)

As life became easier, the trade unions became less bitter and less revolutionary than they had been In the days of Owen they had wanted, in some way or other, to overthrow the new system that was growing up around them Now they ceased to question whether that system was right, and used their strength to get as much as they could out of it for themselves They became willing to co-operate with the employers They concentrated on raising wages, on shortening hours, and on remedying the special grievances of their own particular trades



Each figure = approx 50,000

Compare this with the charts on pages 140 and 141

A certain Thomas Cooper, who had been a prominent Chartist, tells us how ideas had changed in the cotton trade

In our old Chartist times Lancashire working men were in An eye-witness, 1869
 their rags by the thousand, and many of them lacked food
 You would see them in groups discussing the great doctrines
 of political justice *Now* you will see no such groups in
 Lancashire But you will see well-dressed working men talk-
 ing, as they walk with their hands in their pockets, of co-ops
 and their shares in them and in building societies And you
 will see others like idiots leading small greyhound dogs covered
 with a cloth on a string They are about to race and are
 betting money as they go Working men have ceased to
 think and want to hear no thoughtful talk

His criticisms must not be taken too seriously for, in the next sentence, he goes on to explain that he is a lecturer but cannot now get many people to listen to him Other writers, however, seem to take the same view

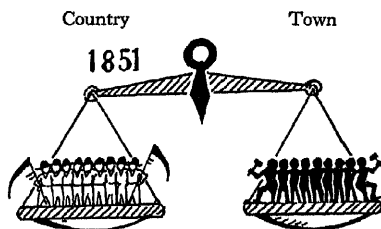
The people have all been busy getting on, some too busy to think of anything except their work, some too set on new pleasures now open to them

These pleasures were not by our standards very thrilling Pleasure
 and consisted chiefly in such things as having rather better clothes to wear and rather better furniture—sometimes even a piano Probably there never was a time when the mass of the people had so little amusement The old pleasures—games and dancing on the green—had gone, and new ones—such as the cinema—had not yet come in

It was not true to say that the workers had ceased to want education The change was perhaps that now they wanted it for their children rather than for themselves Employers also wanted it It was better for them for their hands to have at least some sort of 'book learning', for in a big factory the man or woman who can neither read notices nor write his or her name is a nuisance

There were now a good many schools in England to Education
 which working-class parents could send their children for about 1846

a small fee. Most of these were either run by enterprising teachers who were untrained and who hoped to live on the fees they could collect, or by some religious body. One of the small private schools in Liverpool for instance, was held in a small upstairs room with a sloping roof. Into this were crammed one master, one cock, two hens, three black terriers and forty children. In many of these schools the children were constantly beaten and the master or mistress was quite content even if the children learnt nothing as long as they kept quiet. One old lady said they were 'best asleep'.



Each figure = 1 million

In 1851 there are as many town as country people

A thousand
children in
one room

Big schools run by religious societies on what was called the 'Lancastrian' or the 'National' system were bad in a different way. Two modern historians (Mr and Mrs Hammond) give an account of what a new pupil would have seen and heard on entering such a school.

He would have found over a thousand children close packed sitting on benches all being taught together in one room with only two masters and one mistress in charge. At first the noise would have been deafening, the crowd bewildering, but soon he would have noticed that there was order and method in the din. The children were obeying certain orders, 'Sling hats!' 'Clean slates!' When these orders were given the thousand acted as one child.

Each nine or ten children were in charge of another child called a 'monitor', who taught them the lesson that he had

lately learned himself. To do this he summoned them to stand round him on a semi-circle marked in the passage at the end of each form and taught them to read from a board with the lesson printed large upon it. If however it was a writing lesson then the monitor would stand up on the end of the form on which his pupils were sitting and would dictate certain words to them. Sometimes the whole thousand children would be given dictation all at once, the master reading out about six words and the monitors correcting the slates of their ten pupils. When these had been dictated and corrected the master would go on with the next six, and so on. The Bible was as a rule the only book used.

The great advantage of this system was supposed to be its cheapness. Before the great discovery 'of the use of child labour in teaching', as the Hammonds call it, a teacher had to be employed at least for every fifty children. Under the Lancastrian system there need be only one teacher to several hundred.

















The chief drawback both to the old 'private schools' and to this beautiful new method was exactly what the reader has guessed. The unfortunate children learned nothing. The government one day woke up, surprised by the number of brides and bridegrooms who could not sign their names in the parish register. What was wrong? They sent inspectors round the schools. The inspectors reported that this way of teaching made the children 'lapse into a vagrant state of mind approaching idiocy', and that the effect on the children's bodies was almost as bad as on their minds.

It was cheap
but——

Effect on the
children

Children are often carried out in a fainting state. The visitor who feels the bad state of the air on entering from a purer atmosphere cannot be astonished.

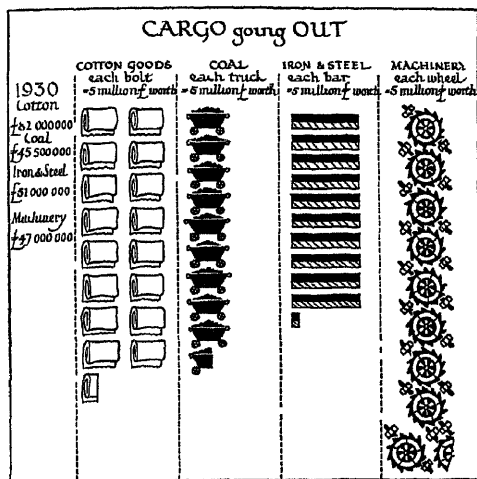
Those who wanted reform did not, however, even after that, find it easy to persuade the government to set up better schools. Yet, as was seen in a former chapter, men like Owen (who did not think highly of the Lancastrian system) had shown very clearly what schools ought to be like. But governments do not like spending money and each of the different churches struggled for the right

CARGO going OUT				
	COTTON WOOL each bale million £ worth	COAL each truck = 5 million £ worth	IRON AND STEEL each bar = 5 million £ worth	MACHINERY each wheel = 5 million £ worth
1825 Cotton £14 400 000 Coal £135 000 Iron & Steel £1 030 000 Machinery £150 000				
1850 Cotton £28 257 000 Coal £1 284 000 Iron & Steel £5 350 000 Machinery £1 002 000				
1875 Cotton £71 720 000 Coal £9 680 000 Iron & Steel £25 095 000 Machinery £90 150 000				
1900 Cotton £69 750 000 Coal £38 620 000 Iron & Steel £31 025 000 Machinery £19 024 000				

The
Churches
want their
say

to teach their particular sort of Christianity to the next generation. They each seemed to prefer that children should go out into the world ignorant, than that their opponents should be given better facilities than they had for teaching religion, or that no religion should be taught.

However, there was some progress. After the Reform Bill of 1832 the government set aside the sum of £20,000



These charts show the growth of trade between 1825 and 1930

This time 'Exports' are shown (see pp 94 and 95)

England sold many other things besides cotton-cloth, coal, iron and steel and machinery

a year to help voluntary bodies to build new schools. Gradually that sum grew (largely owing to the work of a man named Dr Kay Shuttleworth) to over three-quarters of a million pounds in 1861. And as more schools were built and as children were shut out by law from the factories and the mines, the school population went up. In 1858 it reached two and a half millions. By then nearly every child in England was going, at least for a short time, to some sort of school. But as the reader has seen, things were not exactly satisfactory, and, more and more, people came to believe that the only way to get decent schooling for every child was for the State to provide the schools. In 1870 the Education Act was passed. It divided the country into districts

Education Act, 1870

1876
All children
must go to
school

and ordered that in every district there should be an elementary school which was not run for profit and which could be inspected. If a school did not already exist then the town or the district council must build and run one out of the rates. In 1876 all parents were ordered to see that their children had proper instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic, which practically meant that they had to go to school.

Mechanics'
Institutes

John Ruskin

Museums,
1859

Thus, by the end of the period of Victorian prosperity, all the children in England were getting some sort of elementary education. But, till well after the period was over, secondary and higher education was only for the rich. Once the children of working-class parents had left school the only provision for them were the Mechanics' Institutes that had been formed by, or for, workers in many parts of the country. Here lectures were given on science, literature or art. But working men did not always want to go to them. John Ruskin, the most celebrated art critic of the day, taught in one, but he found it difficult to teach a class of pupils who had, as children, never learned to learn. Later he came to the conclusion that this sort of education was not much good — nor was even the opening of public museums and art galleries full of the best statues and pictures of the past. He was asked to give his reasons for this opinion before a Committee of the House of Commons. They asked him, 'if the masses are eager for self improvement' Ruskin said that they were 'thirsty for knowledge'.

But the labour of a day in England oppresses a man and breaks him down, and it is not a refreshment to him to use his mind after that. His mind is languid with labour.

Ruskin, like Owen, was one of those who believed that the 'progress' of which the rich people of his time talked so much, should have been quick and sure instead of slow and doubtful.

Exhibition,
1851

How real most people's belief in Progress was, however, during this time, was shown by the organization of the

first of the great International Exhibitions In Hyde Park, in the middle of the most fashionable district of London, a great glass and iron building was put up. It looked rather like a vast greenhouse, but it was thought and talked of as 'The Crystal Palace'

On the First of May the Great Exhibition which it housed was opened in state by Queen Victoria. Goods shown in it came from all over the world and its organizers meant it to give 'A living picture of the point of Industrial Development at which the world has arrived'. Its chief organizer, Prince Albert—husband of the Queen—hoped that it would do more, that it would in fact show the world that nations had everything to gain by peaceful trade and everything to lose by wars.

London was very gay that season. Distinguished strangers came from all over the world, everybody's Aunts and Cousins flocked up from the country, all drawn by the splendours of the Crystal Palace.

CHAPTER 54
STATESMEN, PARLIAMENT AND
FOREIGN AFFAIRS
(1848 TO 1875)

IN the last three chapters nothing has been said of those who were carrying on the government of the country or of what was happening outside Britain

After the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 English politics became very dull for a time. Once it was decided that corn-growers should not be protected there really was not much left for the two big parties to quarrel over. Both the Whigs and the Tories—the two Parliamentary parties who succeeded each other in office—wanted to keep things as they were, because they both considered that, on the whole, any big change would be a change for the worse. But both were experienced enough to know that, if there was to be no big change, there had to be small changes. What they did regularly differ about was when the time had come for each small change, and how far it was necessary for each to go.

Besides this, of course, each party liked to have what are called 'the sweets of office'—they thought it important and pleasant that they and their friends should be in power.

Some of the statesmen themselves were interesting, and two at least of them, Disraeli and Gladstone, were almost as eloquent as was their great American contemporary, Abraham Lincoln.

Benjamin
Disraeli,
1804-1881

Disraeli was a Jew and began his grown-up life as a novelist and a dandy. His novel, *Sybil*, is very good,

and gives a picture both of fashionable political society and of the conditions in the manufacturing towns. He wrote of what he called 'the two Nations'—the rich and the poor—with splendid imagination.

At first the aristocratic members of the two parties were not sure how they liked this foreign-looking young writer who wore his black hair in ringlets and who was apt to dress so oddly. One lady who met him at dinner says that on that occasion he wore a black velvet coat, purple trousers with a gold band running down the outside seam, a scarlet waistcoat, and white gloves outside which he wore diamond rings. When he rose in the House of Commons to make his first speech he was laughed down. 'I will sit down now,' he said, 'but the time will come when you will hear me!' He was right. The House did hear him for the next forty years, sometimes with alarm, sometimes with enthusiasm. His most important work was done rather later than the years with which this chapter deals, and will be described later in this book. But in 1867, as Tory Prime Minister, he carried through Parliament a bill giving votes to working men who lived in towns. Purple trousers
Reform Act, 1867

Gladstone was very different, rather severe and cold, but a great orator and a man who read and worked gigantically. He thought a great deal about religious questions and could almost always make his hearers believe in his earnestness and devotion to duty. In 1868 he became Liberal Prime Minister, and in the next few years brought about some extremely important reforms. The educational system was improved by the Education Act of 1870 (see Chapter 53) and by opening Oxford and Cambridge Universities to men who were not members of the Church of England. Both the Army and the Civil Service were reorganized. The system of voting by ballot in parliamentary elections was introduced, so that voters should not be bullied into voting for men they did not really support. And a serious attempt was made to deal with the problems of Ireland. William Ewart Gladstone, 1809-1898

II

History would be very much easier to understand, though possibly less interesting, if countries were not affected by what was going on in the rest of the world, or if all the countries in the world were ever all at the same stage

Ireland The repeal of the Corn Laws is a case in point A Tory Prime Minister found it necessary to go against most of the members of his own party because of something that was happening outside England Ireland had not shared the progress of Britain but was still, largely owing to English interference and misgovernment, a poor agricultural country Her people depended for their food upon the potatoes that they grew

1845 In 1845 the potato crop failed entirely and the need to rush in foreign-grown corn to feed the starving Irish nation was the immediate cause of the repeal of the Corn Laws So much did the Irish hate the English and so suspicious were they, after years of misrule, that at first the starving people refused to eat the meal believing that it would turn them black In any case not nearly enough was sent, and what was sent did not reach people in remote country places Within six years the population of Ireland dropped from $8\frac{1}{2}$ to $6\frac{1}{2}$ million Of these at least a million died, and the other million emigrated, some to England (where they were suddenly and disastrously plunged into the life of town and factory which they did not understand), some to America, and some to what are now the Dominions

A million
deaths

One of the results of these terrible troubles was that a strong movement for Irish self-government grew up Since 1801, when the Irish parliament had been abolished, Irish members had sat in the English House of Commons But there were not enough of them to outvote the English members and so laws for the Catholic Irish were made by English Protestants who had never understood Ireland

One result of the famine was that many landlords were ruined and forced to sell their lands. The new landlords were often worse than the old. Intent on making their new lands 'pay', they raised rents, turned out tenants to lay the land down to pasture, threw several small farms into one big one, and in general did all the things that had made the country people of England suffer so much during the time of the enclosures. No doubt, as it had been in England, agriculture in Ireland was improved, but, once more in the the old saying 'fat beasts' meant 'lean poor people'.

In 1848 there was an unsuccessful rebellion, and a little later a secret society called the Fenian Society was formed with branches in Ireland and America. During the next twenty years, in spite of the arrest of their leaders, the Fenians repeatedly stirred up trouble. Three times, for example, the American Fenians tried to invade Canada.

From then until our own day, the history of Ireland has been the story of how England has gradually conceded the different things that the Irish have demanded. But each concession has been made too late to please anyone. Mr Gladstone began in 1869 by disestablishing the Irish Church. No longer was the Protestant Church to be the official church of Catholic Ireland. The next year he went on to limit the power of the landlords to get rid of their tenants as they thought fit. But by this time the Irish were too discontented to be satisfied with such measures, and, as we shall see later, more and more of them asked for Home Rule.

III

During this time English statesmen were also worried by Indian affairs. At first the trouble was with Russia. For years the Czar had been busy making the Russian empire bigger. While the British were extending their influence northwards from India, the Russians were pushing southwards towards the Indian border (see map



□. BRITAIN & TERRITORIES controlled by her

▨. FRANCE & " " " "

■. GERMANY & " " " "

▤. OTHER EUROPEAN POSSESSIONS

..... The RUSSIAN BOUNDARY in the early 19th Century

----- RUSSIAN BOUNDARY
IN 1914

on opposite page) When they met, as one day they probably would in Persia, Afghanistan or China, would they clash? The fear that they might led to suspicion and hostility between the rulers of the two countries, and in 1854 they actually went to war

Will the British and Russian empires clash?

While the British and Russian empires were growing that of Turkey was slowly breaking up. In particular, the Christian states in the Balkans were struggling hard to throw off Turkish rule. When, in 1853, Russia claimed the right to protect them, there came a crisis. Protected by Russia, they would almost certainly remain under Russian influence and so increase Russian power in the world. To England that was an unpleasant thought, and so in 1854 she joined the French in fighting for the Turks against the Russians.

The Crimean War, as it was called because it was fought in the Crimea (see map), is chiefly famous because almost as many British soldiers died owing to the muddles of the British War Office as were killed in battle by the Russians. The War Office, for example, sent out plenty of horses and mules but no hay on which to feed them. For the men there was plenty of food but no fuel with which to cook it, and a whole shipload of boots all for the left foot was solemnly sent out.

Crimean War, 1854-1856

The English and French were victorious, but the only person to win fame in this war was not a general or admiral but a woman, Miss Florence Nightingale.

She was the daughter of a rich man and moved in very 'good society', but unlike her sister she was not satisfied with going to balls and parties. To her family's distress and horror she insisted that what she wanted was a career of her own, and further that what interested her was (of all things), nursing the sick and managing hospitals.

Florence Nightingale, 1820-1910

Nursing was then considered a very low profession. Dickens in *Martin Chuzzlewit* gives an excellent picture of a nurse of the time. 'Mrs Gamp' is a dirty, cunning, cruel, talkative old wretch who knows nothing about

Nursing is 'low' work

She does manage to learn her work

nursing It was almost impossible for an educated and respectable young lady to get any training Only in some Catholic countries, where the work was done by nuns, did it seem possible to learn and Mr and Mrs Nightingale did not want their daughter to mix with 'Papists' Eventually, however, she did manage, not only to get training abroad, but to get a post managing a small nursing home for gentlewomen

When the Crimean War began the state of the English wounded was wretched, and the war correspondent of *The Times* asked why our men could not be nursed by women as the French were? The French had nuns who were attached to the army medical staff Surely there were Englishwomen devoted enough to do this work? Sidney Herbert, who was an influential member of the government, had long been a close personal friend of Florence Nightingale and asked her if she would go out and take a staff of thirty or forty nurses with her

'Quite unnecessary'

When the nurses arrived the army authorities were horrified What was this idea of pampering the men? Florence Nightingale wrote to Sidney Herbert of one old colonel

He was thrown into a cart on some straw when shot through the legs in Spain, he thinks the same conveyance admirable now, and hates Ambulances as the invention of the evil one

Florence Nightingale believes in moving with the times

But Miss Nightingale considered that times had changed

A wounded soldier should be treated with that degree of decency and humanity which the improved feeling of the nineteenth century demands

'Nothing is needed'?

When she got to the big military hospital at Scutari, she found terrible scenes of suffering She had been told that she need take no stores out as 'nothing is needed' She found that there were not enough bedsteads, that many of the wounded had no change of shirt, that such sheets as there were were made of canvas 'so coarse that the wounded men begged to be left in their blankets' There was no bedroom crockery, brushes or

brooms, no knives and forks and no way of cooking special meals for those who were desperately ill

Fortunately she had collected seven thousand pounds and had brought out a great many things with her. Though half the doctors were really trying to do their best and were glad of her help, the other half hated her and her nurses and nicknamed her 'The Bird'. There was trouble too with some of these nurses who had imagined nursing soldiers to be romantic.

Oh dear! Miss Nightingale [said one of them as they stood on the deck of the ship] 'When we land let there be no delays! Let us get straight to nursing the poor fellows!'

'The strongest will be wanted at the wash tub,' was Miss Nightingale's rather damping answer.

The American poet Longfellow wrote of her as 'The Lady with the Lamp', for she used to make a tour of the dark wards at night. The wounded men loved her and used to kiss her shadow as she passed. The Lady with the Lamp

She was popularly thought to be an angel, but she could never have done her work if she had not sometimes been a very stern and grim kind of angel. One thing may seem odd to the reader of to-day. After it was all over she seems never to have asked herself whether war in general or that war in particular might be wrong. Was she an angel?

The best thing she did was to show that a nurse needs training. Many—perhaps nearly all—the new methods by which doctors fight disease to-day would be useless if there were no skilled nurses. Florence Nightingale made nursing a skilled and interesting profession.

IV

The Crimean War had been fought partly because English statesmen were afraid that Russia might have designs on India. They were nervous partly because it was known that there was a great deal of discontent in India itself. It was said in an earlier volume that India

in the days of Clive was rather like China to-day, but that the situation was even more complicated, because people of so many different races and religions lived in India. The East India Company, both before and after it was controlled by the government, had always managed to get each bit of fresh territory by allying itself with one or another of these warring tribes and states. It enrolled Indians in its own armies—for there were always Indians willing to fight those who were of another race or religion.

Mutiny,
1857

In 1857 a mutiny broke out among these Indian troops. There was already much discontent among civilians. In the words of Disraeli, 'The government of India has of late years alienated or alarmed every influential class.' The mutiny spread, and a number of English officials, their wives and families were besieged or taken prisoners and killed. English poets of the time—notably Lord Tennyson—made much of their very real sufferings and heroism. But, while only a few English perished, when (after a few months) the mutiny was put down, English soldiers behaved with terrible severity. The correspondent of *The Times* reported that one general who was on the march ordered so many executions and so much burning of villages that one of his officers had to remind him that if he quite depopulated the country it would be impossible to get supplies for the soldiers.

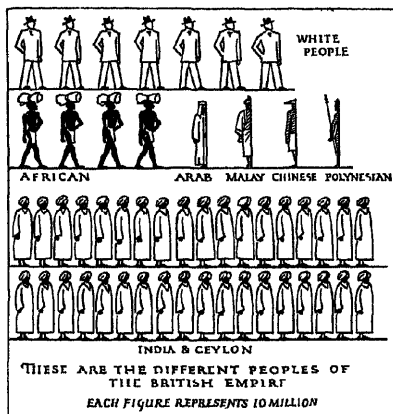
Putting down
the mutiny

After the mutiny had been stamped out the power of the East India Company was finally abolished, and Queen Victoria was declared ruler, and later Empress of India.

Roads and
Railways

When it came directly under the British government the huge 'sub-continent' was in some ways better ruled. For instance, roads and railways were built and telegraph lines were made. Floods and droughts were prevented by damming rivers and new irrigation works replaced those that had been destroyed. At the time of the mutiny there were less than three hundred miles of railway, while at the present time there are more than thirty thousand.

Better communication made it possible to deal with the local famines that had all through history periodically killed off thousands or sometimes millions of the inhabitants. The population began to grow. If they look at the chart on this page readers will see what an enormous proportion of the inhabitants of the present British Empire are natives of India.



But though India was now better governed, ever since the Mutiny, what Mr G M Trevelyan (a celebrated living historian) calls 'a streak of blood' has made for bad relations between brown and white.

But it would not be fair to blame the English for everything that goes wrong in India. Those who now oppress the poorest people—the owners of the land or of the mines and mills—are quite as often people of Indian as of European race. Individuals, too, and even whole tribes are oppressed and ill-treated in the name of one or other of the many religions of the land.

The question of how India ought to be governed is a problem which those who are children now may later

find themselves called upon to study and decide. As readers will see in a later chapter, Indian government is to-day in a state of change

V

One of the worst set-backs to British prosperity came from a struggle with which this country had nothing to do. This was a war between the Northern and Southern states of the United States of America.

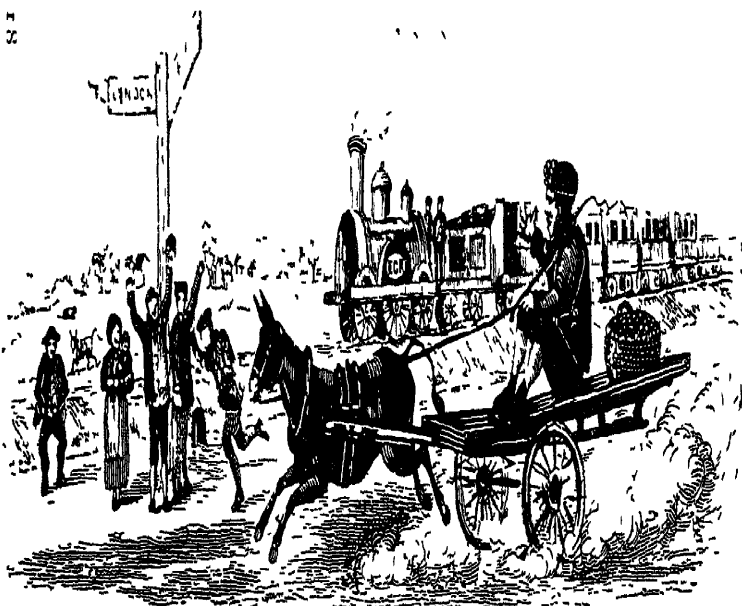
AMERICAN
CIVIL WAR,
1862-65

The two parties had for long been bickering. The manufacturers of the North, who had to face British competition, wanted high taxes on imported goods. The cotton growers of the South, who sold most of their crop abroad and had to meet no foreign competition at home, believed in free trade. The Northerners, who employed only free labour, wanted to abolish slavery as something cruel and inhuman. The Southerners, who worked their plantations by means of negro slaves, wanted to keep it. For years they had disagreed, with the Southerners usually getting the best of it. But the Northerners steadily grew richer and more powerful. Finally, in 1860, the Southerners took the drastic step of seceding from the Union. That is to say, they tried to separate from the Northerners and to form an independent republic of their own. The Northerners denied that they had any right to do this, and in 1862 they went to war.

Bad effects
of a war
always
spread

Here we shall only tell of the effects of the war on this country. In England the war came very near to ruining the extremely prosperous cotton trade of Lancashire. There were in that part of England two thousand cotton factories with three-quarters of a million looms in them. While the armies of the Northern states blockaded the Southern ports, most of these factories had to stand idle, and thousands of cotton operatives and their children almost starved. To save rent, wretched families crowded into as few rooms as possible. They had soon spent their small savings and were obliged to pawn their

Effect on the
English
cotton
workers



On the 26th August, 1856, Mr. GEORGE HOY of 7 Chester Street, Green Street, Bethnal Green sent a Challenge to the Directors of the Eastern Counties Railway to run his Donkey against some of their business Trains—he has since run against and beaten them

A COSTERMONGER AND HIS DONKEY RACE THE NEW TRAIN

Many people were scornful about the slow speed of the new railways
This picture makes fun of them

furniture and their Sunday clothes, and could seldom afford more than bread, porridge and potatoes to eat. Government grants and public subscriptions of over two million pounds were made for their relief, but there was much sickness and suffering.

It is interesting to notice that in England the cause of the war was generally believed to be simply the question whether there were to be slaves or not. Yet while even Liberal statesmen such as Gladstone, Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston were on the whole sympathetic to the South, the cotton workers of Lancashire never resented the Northern blockade. Seeing the war so simply, the ruined and half-starving workers believed that, cost what it might, the negroes must be freed.

POINTS TO NOTICE ABOUT PART II

1 For nearly thirty years trade was good and Britain became rapidly richer.

2 Almost for the first time in history prosperity brought bad art; business men were apt to judge artists by the virtues which brought success in business. Architects made the mistake of imitating the past, but there were excellent novelists and poets.

3 In science the most important work was done in biology and medicine, and Darwin startled the world with the theory of Evolution.

4 Prosperity was shared to some degree by all classes. The population grew rapidly and became more and more concentrated in towns and in the north. Higher wages and regular work enabled many working people to live in comfort, and the education of children was made compulsory and most of it brought under State control.

5 From time to time the smooth running of life in Britain was interrupted by events abroad. There were rebellions in India and Ireland, a war with Russia, and a civil war in America which brought distress to Lancashire. The war with Russia is remembered chiefly because it enabled Florence Nightingale to establish nursing as a profession.

6 For this period the historian uses the same kind of sources as for Part I.

PART III

CHAPTER 55

'WIDER STILL AND WIDER' WHITE MEN CONTROL THE TROPICS (1875 TO 1900)

DURING the boom period that has been described in the last four chapters, people in Britain had not been much interested in any of the colonies, except India. Statesmen and business men had felt that, in a world where trade was fairly free, colonies were more trouble than they were worth. Settlers still continued to go out, and the populations of Australia, South Africa and Canada grew steadily. Lord Blatchford, Under-Secretary to the Colonial Office, stated the British attitude to them

Why have an empire when you can trade with the whole world?

I had always believed that the destiny of our colonies is let the independence, and that in this point of view the function of the Colonial Office is to secure that our connection, while it lasts, shall be profitable to both parties and our separation, when it comes, as amicable as possible.

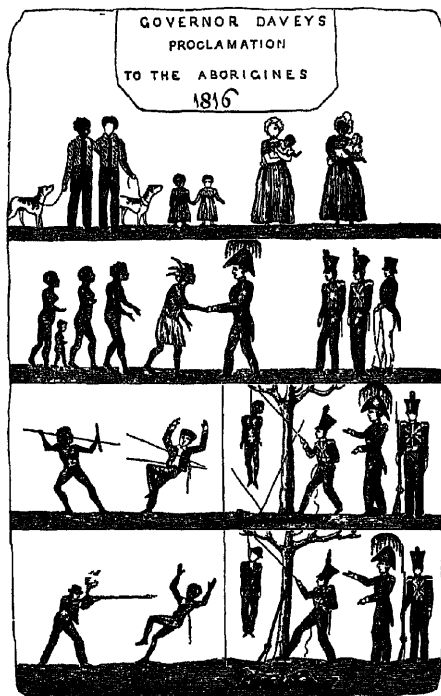
Let the Colonials manage their own affairs

So during this time (between 1850 and 1875) very little territory was added to the British Empire. Unfortunately, no one thought that it would be a good thing to apply this sort of argument to Ireland, the part of the British Empire that passionately wanted to be independent.

But about 1875 it began to be clear that the boom was not going to last for ever, and leading writers and politicians began to think and talk more and more about the Empire.

The Boom shows signs of coming to an end

The Empire about 1878 Benjamin Disraeli, who has already been spoken of, was now the leader of the Conservative party, and was Prime Minister from 1874 to 1880. He was one of the



This poster was meant to show people who could not read, that this quite early Colonial Governor wanted friendship and justice between Black and White

statesmen who believed that the possession of a large empire was necessary if Britain were to continue to be the most prosperous country in the world. So, while he and the Conservative party controlled affairs, Zulu-

land, in South Africa, an area of ten thousand square miles with a population of two hundred and forty thousand people, was annexed. On the Northern border of India Afghanistan was conquered, the Fiji Islands, Kashmir, and most of Burma were annexed, and the conquest of many other countries in Asia and Africa begun. Queen Victoria was given the title of Empress of India, and it was arranged—much against the wishes of Indian business men who wanted to develop a cotton industry in India—that cotton goods made in Lancashire were to be brought into India almost without paying duty. So important did the Conservatives think the Indian Empire that at great cost they bought a big block of shares in the Suez Canal (which had been made by French engineers and opened in 1869), and even nearly went to war again with Russia when the Czar's government seemed likely to take Constantinople from the Turks.

New
countries
conquered









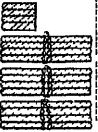

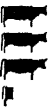
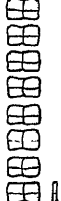
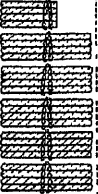


But it must
be possible to
get there

But these additions to the British Empire were only a beginning. In the course of thirty years, from 1870 to 1900, a total area of four million seven hundred thousand square miles was added, and about eighty-eight million people were brought more or less forcibly under British rule. Nearly all these new lands were tropical and the new British subjects brown or black. What caused this sudden thirst for new land? And why did those who ruled Britain suddenly change to a new policy which not only involved her in almost constant 'little wars' but also made their country very unpopular among other European nations? European statesmen all believed in 'the balance of power' and were exceedingly uneasy at this new policy.

II

In the first place, during this period Britain again and again found that her foreign trade was hampered by political events in countries over which she had no control. The Lancashire cotton trade had been nearly

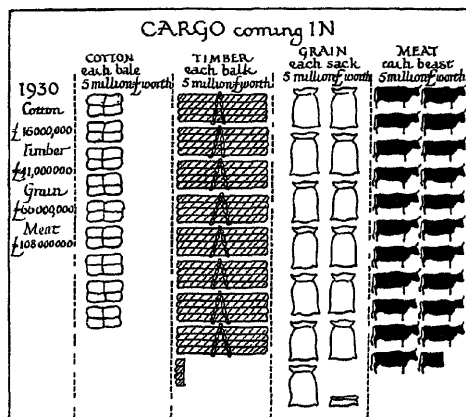
It is con-
venient to
control your
customers

CARGO coming IN				
	COTTON (RAW) each bale 5 million worth	TIMBER each ball 5 million worth	GRAIN each 5 bush 5 million worth	MEAT each beast 5 million worth
1825 Cotton £7470 000 Timber £419 000 Grain £114 000				None
1850 Cotton £21 552 000 Timber £2 404 000 Grain £12 190 000 Meat £116 000				
1875 Cotton £46 260 000 Timber £15 424 000 Grain £26 120 000 Meat £10 110 000				
1900 Cotton £40 987 000 Timber £27 870 000 Grain £62 992 000 Meat £46 783 000				

And what
about raw
materials?

ruined by the American Civil War, then other countries wanted to develop their own manufactures and put up tariffs against the 'dumping' of cheap British goods

There was another factor too. Science and technics were advancing more and more quickly, and all sorts of new raw materials were wanted by British manufacturers. Most of these things could only be grown in tropical countries. Though the motor-car with its big rubber



These charts show the growth of English trade from 1825 to 1930. These are goods coming in. Many other things were imported besides raw cotton, timber, grain and meat.

tyres had not yet been invented, rubber was wanted for all sorts of things, for hose-pipes, macintoshes, and for making vulcanite.

Then all sorts of uses were being found for the oil that can be got from tropical nuts and seeds 'Copra', the dried meat of coco-nuts from which oil can be pressed, was wanted in huge quantities and there were other seeds and nuts whose oil could be used as fats for foods such as margarine and for making soap. Now, too, that the workers of England were more prosperous, there was much more demand for tea, coffee, cocoa and chocolate.

It was much more comfortable for the English manufacturer who wanted these things as his raw materials to get them from countries where his own government was in political control. Then he could be sure that no sudden war or new tax would interfere with the calculations on which he based his profits.

There was one further reason for the sudden burst

New things
from the
tropics

It is also
convenient
to control
those from
whom you
buy

What does
'the export
of capital'
mean?

of enthusiasm for the Empire This was a habit that British investors had got into of 'exporting their capital' This is a way of making money that is not very easy to understand, but since it is now very important it is worth while to try to see how it is done

The reader already knows about what is called the 'hire-purchase' system If a well-off family wants a new car or a new set of furniture or a new radio, or if a poor family want some new clothes and have not got the money to pay cash down, they get what they want and, out of salary or wages, pay the firm who sells so much a week or a month

Suppose a
new railway
is wanted

Now suppose, instead, that a poor or an undeveloped country, or more likely a group of business men in a poor or undeveloped country, wants a new railway They will not, as a rule, be able to get the railway built for them by a firm that will let them pay on the hire purchase system But they will borrow the money to pay for the materials and skilled labour, and they will often get both from the country from which they borrowed

You borrow
the money

In 1880 this sort of thing had been going on for some time British investors or bankers had been lending money to groups of foreign business men or to foreign governments With this money the foreign groups or governments had bought British goods—particularly iron, steel and machinery As a rule, however, when capital is exported the foreign loan is not paid back Both sides prefer that only interest should be paid So the lending country goes on being interested in the borrower country

This sort of 'hire purchase' building of factories and general development still goes on and is very important

Now it is quite easy to see that the firm who 'lends' cars or refrigerators on the hire-purchase system will be ruined if suddenly all the people who still owe them money are unable or unwilling to go on paying the instalments Just so a nation that lends to other nations (that is who 'exports capital') will want to make sure that the country to which the money is lent should go

on being able and willing to pay the interest So the government of the lending nation will be always tempted to interfere in the affairs of the nation to whom money has been lent, not always with the object of helping the people of that nation—but in order that the interest may be regularly paid

It is convenient to control those to whom you have lent

Backward or unruly countries always offered to pay a higher rate of interest than peaceful countries, so though the risk was greater it was always very tempting to the more daring financiers to lend to such countries Then, when trouble came, it often happened that the lender's government was tempted to take over the government of the borrower country and rule directly and in such a way that the interest would be paid

If your credit isn't good you pay high interest

III

It was because of these three things, markets, raw materials and foreign loans that Britain, when boom conditions showed signs of slacking off, began so dramatically to extend her Empire and her 'spheres of influence'

But, as in earlier periods, Britain was not the only country that was trying to push out to new markets, to govern tracts of land where valuable raw material was to be had, or to get control of backward 'hire-purchase' countries

Britain was not the only nation that wanted these things

Between 1880 and 1900 there was a general move to get as much 'colonial' territory as possible Nearly the whole of Africa was carved up and shared among different European powers By being very firm, the United States managed to keep South and Central America as her own particular 'spheres of influence'

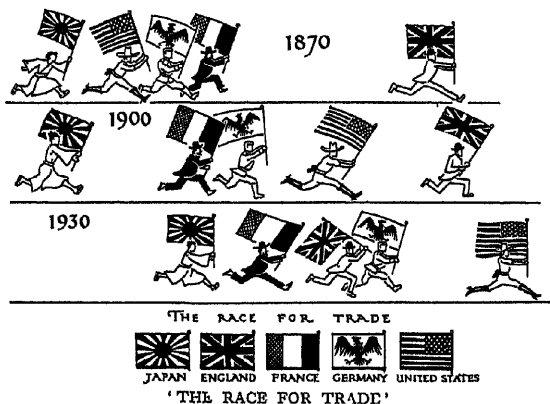
Munro Doctrine

By 1900 the only parts of Africa that were still independent or partly independent were Egypt (independent in name but not in fact), Abyssinia, Liberia, Tripoli and Morocco Soon after 1900 Tripoli was claimed by Italy and Morocco by France, while in 1936 Italy is seeking to make a colony of Abyssinia

The Far East Further East there was a scramble for Burma, the Malay Peninsula and Archipelago and the islands of the Pacific Ocean. Though China was not actually carved up it was divided into 'Spheres of Influence' and its freedom of government was interfered with again and again.

IV

Britain remains rich After 1900 our rate of expansion began to slacken—very little more territory was taken by Britain, indeed, there was little more to take. At first the result of the new policy was what Imperialists like Disraeli and later Joseph Chamberlain had hoped. Britain continued to be prosperous, and, because they were now organized



(how will be described in the next chapter), a section of the British working class—the skilled workers in the best trades—continued to share in this prosperity.

Other countries But there was very active competition. For now Germany, which had lagged behind because she was politically disunited, had become an efficiently governed and go-ahead country. France, which had lagged behind

because of the loss of her Empire in the eighteenth century, had began to catch up in prosperity Above all America had developed her vast 'natural resources'—that is to say she had found her coal, iron, and oil and was working them, and with the help of modern ploughs and modern harvesting machinery she was able to grow wheat and cotton in greater amounts and more cheaply than any other country in the world Her virgin soil needed less cultivation than that of European countries which had born harvests for centuries, there was so much land that enormous areas could be planted and reaped as one field, and their harvests were brought to Europe by rail and ship now that steam had made distance of little account

American wheat flooded into Britain, and British farmers could not compete For this reason farming in Britain suffered very much, and there were many people who believed that wheat growing in Britain, and other industries which were feeling foreign competition, ought to be 'Protected' by a tariff Others—the Free Traders—said no A tariff might 'protect' the farmers, but only by raising the price of the people's food

The statesman who is most famous for standing both for Protection and Imperialism was Mr Joseph Chamberlain His father had been a manufacturer, and when he was quite young he was sent to Birmingham to help to start a branch of a family business in which a new American patent was to be applied to the making of screws He proved to be a very able business man indeed, his firm was soon strong enough to buy out its rivals, to build wire mills and iron mills and run its own collieries, and at the age of thirty-eight he decided to leave business and make a career for himself in the wider field of politics He believed that Britain must now go on to develop the vast tracts of land that she controlled As Colonial Secretary to a Conservative Government Mr Chamberlain received a deputation of business men who told him that there were not enough railways in West Africa.

Joseph
Chamberlain,
1836-1914

In business

Colonial
development
is the thing

I am very anxious [said he] that my fellow countrymen should understand that we hope to develop the resources of such Colonies to the fullest extent. It is only in such developments that I see any solution of those social problems with which we are surrounded. Plenty of employment and a contented people go together, and there is no way of securing plenty of employment except by creating new markets and developing old ones.

Colonial development is in a certain sense a new policy. It is a great policy.

Mr Chamberlain and all those who believed in imperialism felt that it was the destiny of the British people to rule.

I believe in the British Empire, and I believe in the British race. I believe that the British race is the greatest governing race that the world has ever seen. In numerous provinces of India and Egypt—a number of young Englishmen

The 'Dream
of Empire'

have controlled great affairs, have shown a power, a courage, a resolution and an intelligence which have carried them through extraordinary difficulties. The dream of Empire, if it be a dream, is one that appeals to the highest sentiments of patriotism and even of our material interests.

V

And what of the interests of the original inhabitants of the territories that were now controlled in name or in fact by one or other of the great western powers? Sometimes the coming of the white men did some good. Better transport, for instance, meant fewer famines, and in Africa English doctors cured black as well as white. But against some real benefits must be set the fact that the 'little wars' were always going on. In many places—Australia and Ceylon for instance—native races were actually wiped out. In Africa the Germans made hard masters, while, in the Congo, under the horrors of Belgian rule, the native population was in fifteen years reduced from about twenty to about nine million. The story of British dealings with many African tribes too is tragic.

This, says a well-known missionary, is what the Matebele, a tribe living in Rhodesia, say about the result

first of a war in which we acquired their territory and then of British rule

Our country is gone, our cattle gone, our people are scattered
we are slaves to the white men We are nobody and have no
rights or laws of any kind

There were other and more powerful peoples in Africa who were quite clear that they did not want to be part of an empire ruled from Europe These people were the Boers or Cape Dutch, the independent descendants of Dutch immigrants who had settled in the Transvaal and the Orange River districts—wide grasslands inland from Cape Town The Boers now held a large territory of their own which they had got by fighting and by high-handedly taking the land from the Africans A large number of British people had been attracted to the Transvaal because of the gold found there The Boers, who were pious and old-fashioned, hated the 'gold diggers' and would not let them become citizens or vote The British government backed up the 'Outlanders' as the Cape Dutch called the British inhabitants With Mr Chamberlain at the Colonial Office Britain embarked on a war with the Boers, believing (people always seem to believe this about wars) that it would all be over in a month or two At first the Boers beat the British soundly Many Socialists and Liberals had been against the war and sympathized with the Boers When news of British defeats began to come in 'Pro-Boers' became extremely unpopular and had to fly from angry crowds On the other hand, writers and statesmen who were 'patriotic' became popular Most popular of all was Mr Rudyard Kipling. He was an exceedingly brilliant writer of short stories as well as being an imperialist During the Boer War his most imperialistic poems were sung in every music hall and shouted by rejoicing crowds when at last the newspapers began to announce victories

The Boers

Rudyard
Kipling,
1845-1936

VI

End of the Boer War When the Boer War ended, the Great Powers and some of the smaller states of Western Europe had almost shared out the world. Mr J. A. Hobson, a well-known economist, wrote in 1902 about the consequences

Almost the whole of the recent imperial expansion is occupied with the political absorption of tropical lands in which white men will not settle with their families. Nearly all the lands are thickly peopled by 'lower races'. Thus such expansion stands distinct from the colonization of sparsely peopled lands in temperate zones, where white colonists carry with them the modes of government, the industrial and other arts of the mother country. The new imperialism has nowhere extended the political and civil liberties of European countries to any part of the vast territories which have fallen under the government of Western civilized powers. Politically, it is an expansion of autocracy. A small minority of white men exercise diastatic political and economic sway over great hordes of population who are regarded as inferior and incapable of exercising any considerable rights of self-government in politics or industry.

Only China and the half-developed steppes on the borders of the Russian Empire were left. Great Britain had far the largest share of the new domains of the Western Civilized Powers. Other nations were dissatisfied and wanted what they called 'a place in the sun'.

"A place in the sun"

The reader knows what was the next great international event which has to be chronicled—the war of 1914-1918. The causes of this—the most terrible of all the wars that have yet been fought—cannot be understood without bearing in mind that slogan—'a place in the sun'.

CHAPTER 56

THE WORKING CLASS AND THE TRADE UNIONS (1875 to 1900)

LAST time the doings of the workers were spoken of it was pointed out that between 1850 and 1875 those who managed to make their voices heard, that is the skilled men who combined in Trade Unions, thought, just as middle-class people did, that there was really nothing wrong with the world, nothing at least that would not soon be set right. Trade was growing, the skilled Trade Union men had no doubt that their leaders would always manage to keep up a gradual improvement in their conditions. They felt things were getting better

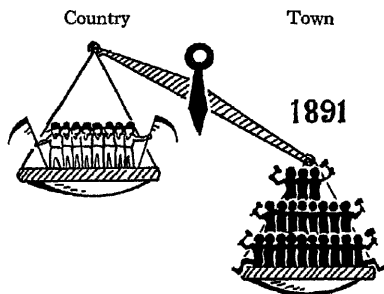
But in the eighteen-seventies a change began. Because trade was less good it became harder for the Trade Unions to keep up wages, while employment became much less regular. To take one instance out of many the shipbuilding trade was hit by the slump, and in 1879 was very much down. But it soon recovered, and in 1883 twice the number of men were working at good wages in the shipyards as had been employed in the slump year. But the very next year, 1884, the shipbuilding boom came to a sudden end. Shipyards were closed right and left, and in every shipbuilding port thousands of skilled men, who had crowded into the shipyards the year before, were thrown out of work. Instance of what happened
1887
Two years' shipbuilding crowded into one

The privation that has been endured by them [writes a Trade Union official] and their wives and children is terrible

After another year had passed shipbuilding was prosperous again. The suffering had been caused by two years' normal shipbuilding having been crowded into one year.

They did not know about the really poor

But this sort of trouble among their members would not by itself have changed the views of the Leaders. Only the best-paid workers then belonged to unions and the slumps were at least partly balanced by the booms. Often Trade Union members knew very little about the life and work of the poorest people of Britain.



Each figure = 1 million

In 1891 the town outnumbered the country people

Everyone knew, of course, that in each town there were a few very poor people, but it had been supposed that these people were poor because they were bad and drank or gambled away their wages. But now evidence from various towns (sentimental short stories very often) suggested that there was a great deal of frightful poverty. In 1886 Mr Charles Booth, a great merchant and shipowner, began to make a really careful and systematic survey of one city—London. Mr and Mrs Sidney Webb, the great historians of the working class in England, have written an account of what happened. Mrs Webb was herself one of the 'skilled helpers' who made the survey for *Life and Labour in London*.

1886
Charles
Booth takes a
long look at
London

The enquiry set on foot by Mr Booth had been begun To with the expectation that a sober and scientific search would everyone's prove that the harrowing tales told by charitable people and surprise agitators were quite exceptional. But to the genuine surprise of the economists and the Trade Union leaders the stories of unmerited misery were shown not to be accidental exceptions to a general condition of moderate comfort but typical of the life of great masses of the population. Charles Booth, after a most careful inquiry made by skilled helpers, was driven to the conclusion that in the wealthiest and most productive city in the world a million and a quarter persons fell below what he called 'The Poverty Line'. That is that He proved they lived in a state of chronic poverty in shockingly that poverty overcrowded conditions and did not have enough to eat was not just Charles Booth's figures disproved once and for all the comfortable belief that in the England of his day such poverty was due to vice or thriftlessness the result of drink or vice.

II

People began to ask what was wrong. Twenty years What was the earlier it had been possible for many people to believe matter? that the poor were miserable because they had no share in the government, or earlier still that it was because there was a tax on corn, or because they had no chance to learn to read or write. But now there was Free Trade, Trade Unions were strong and not interfered with by the law, working men had the vote, and there was free education (of a sort) for every child in the kingdom. The reader has seen that the extension of the empire was one remedy favoured by many people, and that to some extent at first the remedy worked.

That so many working people should still suffer so The cruelly surprised most people except the socialists. And The socialists since the socialists now appeared to be able to say 'I think they told you so', they were listened to by more people than know had been willing to hear them since the days of Robert Owen. Socialists then, as now, had various ideas of what they wanted and especially of how a change could be made. But then, as now, and as in the time of Robert Owen, they agreed about certain things. They all What do believe? thought that the state of things that Charles Booth (who

They want production for use not for profit

was no socialist) described would always go on as long as everything that people eat, wear and want is produced for profit and not for use. They believed that there was really enough of everything to give everyone a decent living, but that a country must plan ahead and decide what things are most needed. They thought that the more things are made in big factories and in huge quantities the more necessary this planning will be. Otherwise they believed there would always be the sort of chaos that made the shipwrights' children suffer when two years' shipbuilding was done in one. They did not think that this sort of thing was the 'fault' of the owners of mines and factories but that was inevitable till the mines and factories were owned by the people. They detested competition between business men not only because it kept down wages, but also because they believed that competition between the business men of different countries must always lead to wars between nations.

They believe that competition leads to war

There are of course—as has already been said—many other views about what makes 'The wealth of Nations', but just now it was this particular set of views that was interesting the working people of Britain. They were not sure that they agreed, but they were willing to listen.

When do people take an interest in Socialism?

In every country the majority of people only listen to Socialist theory when things are not going well, just as they will only listen to advice about health when they are ill. Many people listened to Robert Owen and to the socialists among the Chartists in the bad times at the beginning of the century. Now, when times were again not so good, a great many people again began to listen.

Some of the younger socialists—for instance, Hyndman, Bernard Shaw and Sidney and Beatrice Webb—were middle class or rich, and had become socialists mainly through reading, or through such work as helping Charles Booth with his survey. Some, such as Keir Hardie, John Burns or Tom Mann, became socialists because of their own experience of poverty and through their trade

union work Some of the working-class leaders of this time led very interesting lives John Burns may serve as a sample

When he was about twelve his mother—a country Scotswoman—was left a widow in London and had to take in washing to keep the home together After his work in a candle factory the boy used to help her to carry round the heavy basket to the customers One bitter night they were coming home late and sat down to rest for a moment ‘Mother,’ said the boy, ‘if ever I have the health and strength, no mother shall have to work as you have and no child do in life what I have to do’

John Burns,
born, 1858

Bringing
back the
wash

When he was a little older he went to an engineering works and qualified as a foreman, when he was nineteen he managed to get sent out by his firm to Africa, to a place on the delta of the great River Niger Here, in the course of his work, there were adventures with snakes and an awful day when in mid-stream the blades of the propeller of their boat dropped off

An engineer
in Africa

The small village near us was inhabited by cannibals, while the creek was swarming with sharks and crocodiles

Burns dived and in the end got them and put them on again He had one other adventure of quite a different sort Under the foundations of an old engine shop he came upon a much-damaged copy of Adam Smith’s *Wealth of Nations* He had already begun to read economics but had never possessed this particular book

An old book

One more story, once more in his own words, before coming to the important part of his career

I was the first engineer to make with my own hands the first electric tramcar in this country I had to take my governor’s dynamo and run the tram round the exhibition grounds at the Crystal Palace for six months People were so nervous that though the charge was only sixpence we could not get them into the car at all So I said to my wife, ‘You have got to come down to the Exhibition and get first in the electric tramcar as a decoy duck for the others’

The first
tramcar

Now there were, as have been said, other people who

thought they had a cure for poverty in England. The 'Tariff Reformers' or 'Protectionists' decided to hold a mass meeting in Trafalgar Square and advertised it widely. John Burns and some of his friends, who could never afford to advertise, decided to get to the square an hour early and address all the people who had got together to hear the Protectionists.

This they did with great success, finally (greatly to the annoyance of the unfortunate Tariff Reformers), marching off through the fashionable part of London to hold a further meeting in Hyde Park. The rich clubmen of Pall Mall saw coming down the road this procession of hungry unemployed men and for some reason, which neither of the writers of this book can think of, the clubmen thought it a funny sight, and started to laugh and jeer at 'the great unwashed' as they called them. The unemployed were angry and at once seized the stones, of which the road was then made, and broke all the windows through which the rich were laughing. Burns and Hyndman were arrested.

How the
London
dockers lived

In 1889 employment was bad in all trades. The men who unloaded ships at the London docks worked for 4d an hour, and there were so many of them anxious to work even for this wage that any one man seldom made more than 7s a week. Early in the morning, when the dock gates opened, a crowd of men would already have been waiting for hours and would each try to get any job that might be going.

I have seen dock hands [said John Burns] fighting to get in at the gates like people tussling in the passage of a burning theatre.

They would
have to act
together

Such competition for casual jobs had driven these men and their families below Booth's 'Poverty Line'. Burns and two or three other Socialists tried to organize the dockers. They urged them to combine and then, all together, ask for better conditions and pay, instead of 'climbing over each other's bodies'.

The men were persuaded, but the employers would not budge, so a strike was called. The men asked for what was called 'The Docker's Tanner' instead of fourpence an hour, and that each man should be employed for a shift of at least four hours. The employers refused all the men's demands. Then came the difficult task of finding money for strike pay to keep the men and their families. They strike

The employers had, of course, counted on being soon able to starve them into accepting the old terms, but when news spread of the reasons for the strike and of the terrible lives lived by the men, public sympathy was soon on their side. Money to help them to hold out began to be subscribed. Still the employers would not budge. Large sums came in, the workers of Australia heading the list with contributions that amounted to twenty-five thousand pounds. Week after week the strike went on, and at last the men's funds began to give out. There was no violence, but there was dogged determination on both sides. Public sympathy with the dockers
Workers from all over the world send help

Everything possible was done by Burns and the other strike organizers to let London and the world in general know what it was all about. There was no laughing this time when seven thousand half-starved dockers marched through the fashionable part of London with their banners.

The newspapers nearly all came out in favour of the men. A committee of notable people—such as the Lord Mayor of London, Cardinal Manning and the Bishop of London—begged the Dock Companies to give way to demands which they believed to be just. At last, after three months, they did. Ind of the strike

The whole working class felt that a victory had been gained.

Burns next turned his attention to the government of London. Like many socialists of his day he believed that many of the things that all socialists wanted,—better houses for the workers, better schools, parks and play- John Burns thinks about 'Local Government'

The London
County
Council grounds for the children—could be got if they could work through the new ‘ Local Government ’ bodies that were now being given control of such things in the different cities. So he ‘ stood ’ and was elected to the London County Council.

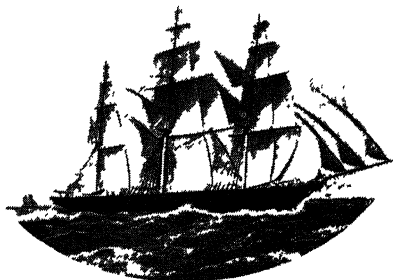
In
Parliament
he had to
work with
Liberals But he had always also had the idea of going into Parliament, and now that most working men had the parliamentary as well as the municipal vote, this did not seem impossible. But he found that in order to get in he had to work with the Liberals, although he only agreed with them on a few points such as giving Home Rule to Ireland. It was early in 1900 that a separate party was formed to represent the interests of working men—the party that we now call the Labour or Socialist party.

This drama of the Trade Union and Labour movements like that of Imperialism, was played against a background of change. Some of these changes must be recorded in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 57

TECHNICS AND SCIENCE CHANGING THE WORLD WHAT THE ARTISTS THOUGHT OF IT (ABOUT 1880 TO ABOUT 1910)

FORCES that made for change, forces that no one could resist, control, or slow down, the discoveries made in



FASTEST TYPE OF SAILING SHIP EVER BUILT

This is the *Ariel*. Many such 'clippers' were built both in American and English shipyards, just as steamers had begun to come in.
Notice her jib and foresails.

science and technics, were sweeping willing and unwilling into the new century. New inventions were now being

made so quickly that it is impossible here to do more than suggest what they were. Even those that seem simplest often had far-reaching consequences.

Refrigeration
changes the
trade of the
world

Take one that may not at first seem very important. Between 1880 and 1900 improved ways of 'chilling' meat and fish and later of carrying fruit were discovered, and advances were also made in the ways in which food is canned and preserved. This meant that these foods no longer had to be produced near where they were going to be eaten. This changed the trade of the world.

And the
meals of its
people

At first the meat and fish were frozen hard, which rather spoiled the taste, but later it was found that the temperature need not be so cold, so that the food kept its flavour. Fruit could be carried on voyages lasting many weeks if the temperature and ventilation of the fruit ships was kept just right. There is always grass to feed stock somewhere in the world, somewhere it is always summer, always harvest, so now northern peoples could have fresh fruit all through the winter.

Faraday's
work brings
unexpected
things

Faraday's scientific work, too, was now being applied by the inventors. No sooner was the world used to the fact that people and goods could travel quickly from place to place, than it was discovered that it was possible to

Telegraph
Telephone

communicate still more quickly by telegraph. The messages of governments and individuals were sent in this way, and also News. Newspapers all over the world had the new linotype printing machines, and in most countries—because of the spread of schools—a large reading public. Now newspaper correspondents all over the world were linked to the editorial office by means of cables lying under the oceans and seas. At first each cable had only been able to carry one message at a time. Now cables were laid that could carry many.

Electric
Transport

The reader has seen how, when John Burns drove the first electric tramcar at an exhibition, it had seemed a dangerous new toy. Within a year or two, thousands upon thousands of men and women were using the 'new toy' to get to and from their work. The gas lamps with

which go-ahead towns had so proudly lighted their main streets were becoming out of date and were replaced by the new queer flickering electric lights on very high poles Lighting about 1890

Houses and theatres and soon passenger ships, were lit with the new light, and by 1896 electricity for tramcars and for use in factories, was being produced in thirty or forty towns in Great Britain

No sooner were people used to the telegraph than a new instrument came into use. By 1885 there were already about fourteen thousand telephone subscribers in Great Britain, and by 1891 the telephone was not only popular and fairly cheap but it was possible to telephone from London to Paris Telephone in general use (about 1890)

Though they had as yet hardly done more than peep outside the laboratories of inventors, two new inventions were being made. We know them as the Motion Pictures and Broadcasting

Then in Engineering new things were being done and attempted that also—more literally—changed geography Geography changes. In the last chapter something was said about the Suez Canal (if readers possibly can they should now get a good-sized map of the world and have a look at it, the map in this book had to be rather small). Looking at the map the reader will see that when the Suez Canal was built, the route from England to India was completely changed. Ships had always gone round the southern end of Africa—the Cape of Good Hope. Now they saved many days and much coal by going down past Gibraltar, down the Mediterranean and through the Red Sea Suez Canal

But this was not the only important canal that was planned. De Lesseps, the French engineer who had designed the Suez Canal, was asked if he could drive a waterway for big ships through the Isthmus of Panama. If the canal could be made, the sea route to the Pacific would no longer be round the storm-beaten Cape Horn. The work was begun, when an unexpected stop was put to it by something that lay outside the science of engineer- Panama Canal

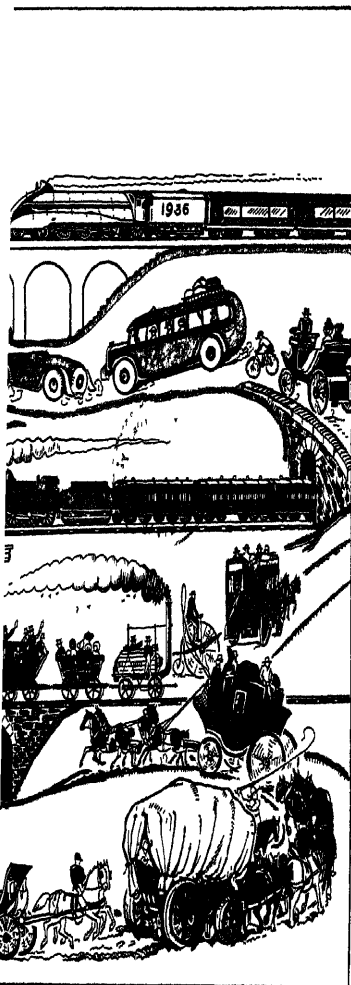
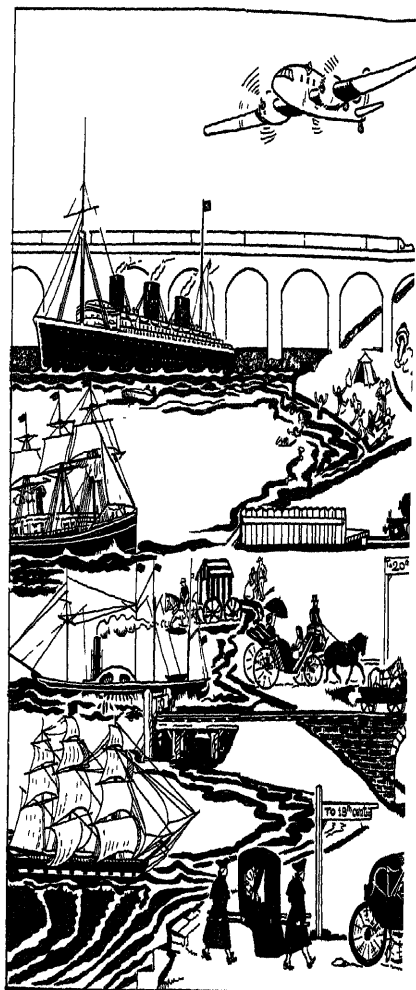
ing The engineers and other workers on the spot were attacked by a disease that had long been dreaded by sailors—Yellow Fever Hundreds died and work on the canal had to be abandoned when it had already cost fifty million pounds

Yellow Fever says 'No'

How Medicine was making change possible But the science of medicine had just reached a point when it was possible for doctors to tackle the extremely complicated problem of how this particular disease spreads Pasteur and Koch had done work which led to the discovery of the germ origin of many diseases Lister's work had shown how this knowledge could be applied to surgery Now a whole army of scientific workers, American, French, English and Japanese, began to apply it to other sicknesses, particularly tropical diseases Yellow Fever, Malaria and Sleeping Sickness were among them The story of how these three plagues were at last traced to two different kinds of mosquito, and to the tsetse fly, forms one of the most fascinating chapters of the history of medicine

How change made new discoveries urgent It is interesting, by the way, to notice that it was when great sums of money were invested in the tropics by the civilized Western Powers, and not until then, that new ways of fighting tropical diseases were discovered

The metal industries are changing As has been said, some of the most important new inventions of the time were not very showy There were improvements in making steel alloys, for instance, that counted a great deal when it came to making girders or bridges, and electricity made possible the extraction of a 'new' light metal, Aluminium These things were important in world politics It was found that for such new processes, and in the new electrical industry, many new metals were wanted—nickel, magnesium, chromium, tungsten for instance—for blending with the metals that had always been considered important Many of these could not be found in any quantity in Britain But they were found in Africa, they might be found in Australia or in South America, or could it be China or the Antarctic?



TRANSPORT METHODS CHANGE BY SEA, LAND AND RAIL AIR TRANSPORT IS NEW

So the business men or the governments of manu-^{'New'}facturing countries sent out scientists and prospectors ^{minerals} to find the 'new' minerals, sometimes claiming tracts of barren desert on the chance that some of them were to be found there. Most interesting of all was the immensely valuable Radium found in Pitchblende. But the story of Madame Curie's discovery and its conse-^{Mme Curie}quences is alas! too long to tell here.

II

Soon another invention made the search for yet another ^{Oil} mineral important. For a long time mineral oil had been used in small quantities, first to burn in lamps and then for lubricating machinery, and it had long been known that crude oil could be refined into petrol. The invention of the internal-combustion engine made oil (because of the petrol made from it) into one of the most valuable minerals in the world, and those who owned the land under which it was found, into millionaires. Now in place of 'gold rushes' there were 'oil rushes'.

The first vehicle to be fitted with a petrol motor was ^{A motor-}(of all things!) a tricycle ^{tricycle, 1885}.

It is amusing to note that the development of the motor-car was held up in England for several years because of an absurd law. In 1865 (either because the railway owners were jealous, or because people were genuinely alarmed by the idea of snorting 'steam carriages' on the roads) a law had been passed which said that a man with a red flag must walk or ride ahead of any 'mechanically propelled vehicle' on the road. This law was not repealed till 1896, by which time other nations had begun to make motor-cars and an Englishman—Mr. Edge—had won the Gordon Bennet motor race from Paris to Vienna. After the law was repealed motor-ing went ahead in Britain, and by 1909 there were—counting buses and taxi-cabs—about two hundred thousand motor-cars on the roads.

By this time an entirely new and most exciting use for

The first aeroplane, 1905 the petrol engine had been discovered. The first work was done in the United States. In 1905 the brothers Wilbur and Orville Wright added the first motor to the gliders with which they had been experimenting, and soon it became clear that, though there was still a great deal to learn about flying, the aeroplane was not a scientific toy. In 1908 Wilbur Wright flew fifty-six miles in an hour and a half, and in 1909 Bleriot flew the Channel from Calais to Dover.

III

1900 Some people liked these hurrying never-ending changes and some hated them. In Britain the death of Queen Victoria and the beginning of the new century came together. The last age had been a great one. Would the new be better or worse?

King Edward VII, 1901 When Queen Victoria died and the gay and pleasure-loving Prince of Wales came to the throne, and the century came to an end, it seemed to some people like the end of the world. There was surely coming an end to respectability, tranquillity, and family life. Some people in short would do nothing but look back.

Artists had got into a habit of looking back Many writers, painters and architects had long felt weary of changes that did not seem to improve anything. They felt a longing for past times, a longing to get away from the everyday world. All through the last century there had been much imitation of the Middle Ages. 'We must go back,' sensitive people had cried, 'back to nature, back to the Middle Ages, back to the art-loving days of the Renaissance.' For the last thirty or forty years the 'Pre-Raphaelites' or the 'Aesthetes', as such people were called later, had refused to bother about anything that they considered 'modern and ugly'—they linked the two words as a matter of course. Swinburne, 1837-1909 Swinburne, one of the best poets of the end of the century, had almost always written about Greeks and Romans. His verse had a fine gusto and swing about it, especially when he chose to write about the country.

When the hounds of spring are on winter's traces,
 And the mother of months in meadow and plain
 Fills the shadows and windy places
 With lisp of leaves and ripple of rain

Some of the aesthetes were very good artists and poets, some were not. Good or bad, many people laughed at them.

Gilbert and Sullivan, whose comic operas were the rage in London after 1880, wrote amusing parodies about the silliest of them, the sort of young man who boasted that he, Gilbert and Sullivan,
1886-1911

Walked down Piccadilly with a Poppy or a Lily in his Medieval hand

The absurd poet in this particular very funny light opera, *Patience*, is nearly always attended by twenty love-sick maidens who sing in chorus.

William Morris was another of many artists and poets who believed that people ought to go back to the old medieval way of making things by hand.

IV

The best of the younger writers did not feel like this, Kipling,
1865-1936 however. They realized the excitement of living in a new age. Rudyard Kipling, for instance, saw the beauty of machines and taught people to value the new inventions. Each new discovery—from flint arrows to the compass—had, he said, always been greeted by the silly complaint that they had ‘killed Romance’. But really Romance had survived them all, it was those who would do nothing but look backwards who could not see him.

‘Romance!’ the season-tickets mourn,
 ‘He never ran to catch his train,
 But passed with coach and guard and horn—
 And left the local—late again!’
 Confound Romance! And all unseen
 Romance brought up the nine-fifteen

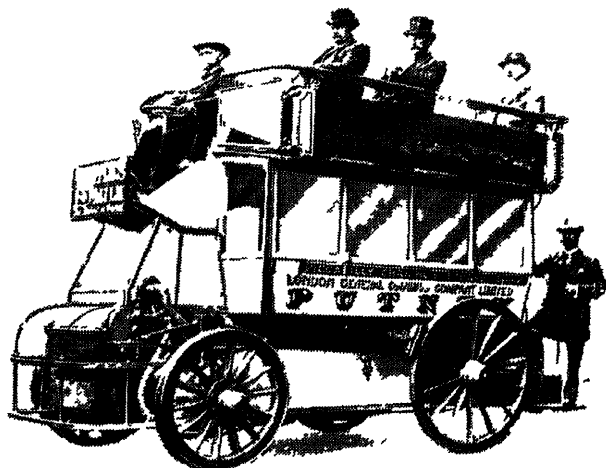
His hand was on the lever laid,
 His oil-can soothed the worrying cranks,
 His whistle waked the snowbound grade,
 His fog-horn cut the reeking Banks,
 By dock and deep and mine and mill
 The Boy-god reckless laboured still !

Robed, crowned and throned, he wove his spell,
 Where heart-blood beat or hearth-smoke curled,
 With unconsidered miracle,
 Hedged in a backward-gazing world,
 Then taught his chosen bard to say
 'Our King was with us—yesterday !'

H G Wells, 1866 Two of the best of the younger socialist writers who welcomed the new age are still writing to-day. They are Mr H G Wells and Mr Bernard Shaw. If readers of this book have never read Mr H G Wells's *First Men in the Moon* and the rest of his 'Scientific Romances' they should do so at once. Mr Wells, whose first training was in biology, taught the ordinary reader that science is exciting and interesting as well as important. When he first began to write this was an entirely new idea. There was no other writer who understood what the scientists were after, and the scientists themselves were so busy that they did not bother to explain. To-day, literature has hardly yet learnt to use and to make alive the vast new worlds of science. *Martin Arrowsmith*, a novel, by Sinclair Lewis, is one of Mr Wells's few literary grandchildren. To-day, his films about the future thrill thousands of boys and girls.

Mr Bernard Shaw, 1856 Mr Bernard Shaw was not much interested in new science, but he was, and is, intensely interested in new ideas about right and wrong and about how the world ought to be governed. As the reader probably knows, he writes plays. When his work was first acted the dullness of the British stage was fearful. Hundreds of plays were written whose only possible interest was 'Who married who', and nine times out of ten it was impossible to care a straw. Mr Shaw's plays were not only extremely witty but brought in all the questions about which

people really argued In *Major Barbara*, for instance, he makes the audience excited about whether it is right to use money made in a way that you think wicked (making whisky and guns in this case) for something you think right (helping tramps to become upright and



In 1904 motor omnibuses were first used in London

religious citizens) In another, *St Joan*, he uses a historical story (that of the burning of Joan of Arc) to discuss the extent to which governments have a right to shut-up and generally ill-treat good and sincere people who have influence and who insist upon preaching doctrines that, in the government's opinion, must do serious harm

POINTS TO NOTICE ABOUT PART III

(About 1875 to 1904)

1 The boom began to slacken and the trade and population of other countries to catch up

2 One way by which Britain ought to keep her trade was by expanding the Empire. Industrial countries found many reasons for trying to get undeveloped land.

3 Immense improvements in transport and technical changes in industry made tropical products more and more important.

4 Africa and much of Asia were shared out into colonies and 'spheres of influence' by white peoples.

5 In Britain the Trade Union movement became aware of unskilled labourers living below the 'poverty line'. There were many strikes and what is now the Labour Party was formed.

6 Science and invention were still hurrying the world along. New industries made 'new' minerals important and the invention of the petrol engine made possible the motor-car and the aeroplane.

7 Some writers and poets liked all this change, some longed for the past.

PART IV

CHAPTER 58

HOME POLITICS AND IRELAND

(ABOUT 1900 TO 1914)

SINCE about 1875 the problem in Britain had been how ^{The} to keep up prosperity. Many people thought that this problem meant how to keep the country ahead in the race for trade, and the problem—as they saw it—was made much more complicated by the fact that in almost every trade strong Trades Unions existed. Every year the owners of British mines and factories were having to meet still ^{Business men} more serious foreign competition. In the world market ^{saw the} more and more coal and iron and manufactured goods ^{Labour Unions as a} were now being sold that were produced by workers who ^{nuisance} were not yet organized into Trades Unions, and who were still living in the terrible conditions of the British workers of the eighteen-thirties. Because of this these goods could often be sold more cheaply than English goods.

Now the Socialist economists believed that it did not ^{The} matter a bit if English goods were 'undersold' on the ^{Socialists} world market. They said, 'Let the world market go ^{said} hang and either run the factories for the common good without worrying about a money profit, or else let the workers of Britain be paid a high wage, then they will want to buy the goods themselves. You will then have, for the first time in the world, a happy people and a

"home market" that will absorb millions of tons of goods, your problem will disappear'

The 'Free
Traders'
said

'Not at all,' said the free traders and those who believed in 'Laissez-Faire'—'Let Be' 'You Socialists want justice and are losing sight of something much more important Prosperity! Abundance! When England was really great was the time when there wasn't all this interference If you want prosperity you must have Free Trade and as far as possible leave everything to the "laws of Supply and Demand"'

For instance

They were able to point out that in some cases government interference really had been bad for trade For instance, there had been a lot of 'interference' from the government Post Office and various Town Councils in the development of electricity for lighting towns and with the development of telephones, and the law had interfered with the motor-car industry In America and Germany, where commercial companies had been allowed to work under the ordinary patent laws, the new electrical industries had shot ahead

The 'Protectionist
Imperialists'
said

The Protectionist Imperialists led by Mr Chamberlain said, 'Not at all We must have government interference, but it must be of the right kind We must protect British industry with a Tariff so that foreign-made goods will cost as much here as British-made goods You can't leave it all to the laws of supply and demand when we are competing with low-paid workers abroad Free Trade within the Empire is all right, but not with the foreigner As for selling in the world market, we can do that too if we develop our Empire, because then we get our raw materials cheap If they are only cheap enough we can compete for foreign markets without having to reduce wages at home'

Now only half the Conservative party believed in Mr Chamberlain's remedies (which he began to preach in 1903 and 1905) and the party was so torn by what was called 'The Tariff Reform' question that Mr Balfour, the Prime Minister, decided that he could no longer hold

his ministry together. There was a general election and the Liberal party got a large majority in the House of Commons and formed a government. It is interesting ¹⁹⁰⁶ to note that in this House of Commons sat twenty-nine socialist Labour members.

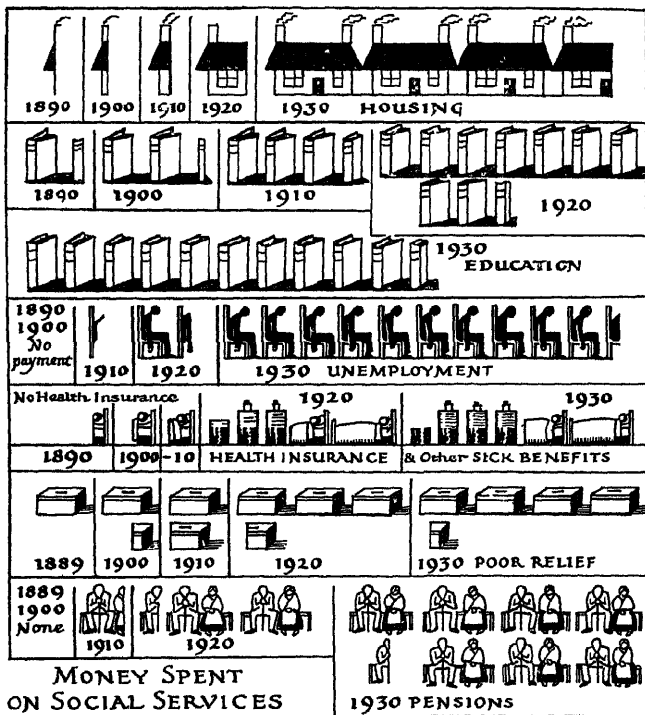
Now the Liberal party which was in power from 1905 to 1911 had its own ideas as to how the questions of the time were to be settled.

II

Trade was bad and, as prices were rising, there was growing discontent among the workers, for the Trades Unions were finding it impossible to make employers raise wages as quickly. The Liberals did not believe that it was necessary to put on Tariffs, and they certainly rejected the Socialist idea that the land and factories ought to be publicly owned. ^{What the Liberals thought}

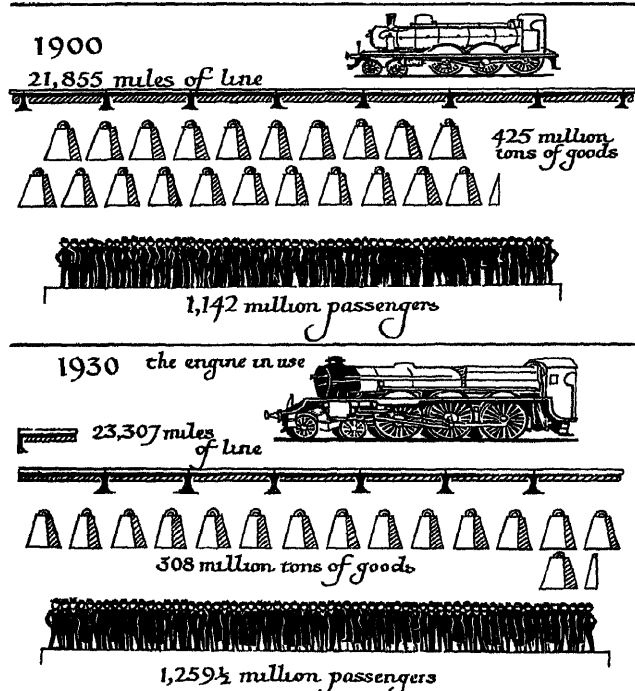
As the reader has seen, factory acts and other regulations had from time to time been made law. The Liberals now wanted to go further and spoke definitely of transferring some of the wealth from the rich to the poor. This was to be done by heavier taxes on the rich to pay for 'social services'. (The chart overleaf shows what is meant by 'social services'.) In that way, the Liberals believed, some of the worst evils of the time could be remedied, and the working classes could be induced not to vote for the Socialists.

So from 1905 to 1911 Liberal governments were busy passing new laws. The chart shows the increasing amounts spent and gives an idea of what took most of the money. ^{What they did, 1905-1911} In 1906 a law was passed for the feeding of poor children at school, another for compensating workmen who were injured at their work, another for providing work for the unemployed. ^{Free meals for school children} In 1907 a certain amount of free medical service was provided for school children. In 1908 small pensions were given to people over seventy. In 1909 minimum wages were laid down for certain badly paid trades, in 1911 a scheme of National Sick pay.



This chart shows that in 1890 very little money was spent on 'Social Services' in England, and how gradually this amount was increased and new benefits such as unemployment insurance and old age pensions were added

Health Insurance was started Employer and employed both contributed to a fund from which the employee drew sick pay if he was too ill to go to work In a few



This shows the Growth of Railways (2) (see p 29)

trades there was the same sort of scheme of insurance against unemployment

These things—though they were at that time only small beginnings—did something to make less wretched the state of the millions who lived below Charles Booth's 'Poverty line' and made the lives of all working-class families a little less insecure, but they meant, of course, an increase in taxation

The Conservatives declared that the Liberals were bringing in 'Socialism and Robbery' The Liberals were quite ready to hit back

III

The Con-
servatives
resist

' Mr
Balfour's
poodle'

Lords throw
out the
Budget, 1909

But the Conservative opposition had ways of fighting laws which they disliked They might be in a minority in the House of Commons, but they controlled the House of Lords The House of Lords, besides the bishops and law lords, consisted of hereditary peers who were nearly all big landowners and were nearly all conservative The Conservatives always praised the House of Lords They liked to say that it was 'the watchdog of the constitution' To this the Liberals replied, 'Watchdog nothing!' it was 'Mr Balfour's poodle' Certainly it was biased in favour of Mr Balfour and the Conservatives whom he led When they were in power it passed their measures Now it was turning down law after law passed by the Liberal majority in the Commons In turn it wrecked the government's plans for improving education (because the Liberals threatened to weaken the control exercised by the Church), for regulating the drink trade, and for remedying some of the abuses of the Scottish land system At last the Lords threw out the Budget which provided for the payment of Old Age Pensions That was the last straw Never before had a budget been rejected by the Lords (for many years it had been agreed that they had no power to *alter* money bills) No government could possibly allow the House of Lords to overthrow its whole policy by preventing the collection of the necessary taxes Mr Asquith, who was then Liberal Prime Minister, decided to limit the powers of the Upper House

This was not an easy thing to do, for the limiting law would have to be passed by both houses, and the Lords would naturally not want to 'sign their own death warrants', as they said Now the King has the power of creating peers, but the understanding is that he does so

only on the advice of his ministers. The question was, if the Lords would not yield, would Mr. Asquith be able to persuade King Edward to create five hundred Liberal peers and swamp the old 'Die-hard' members? Mr. Asquith led people to believe that he had persuaded King Edward. Just as this alarming idea was being digested by the Peers King Edward died, and was succeeded by his son King George V. ^{Death of King Edward VII} What would the new King feel about it? After two general elections and a great deal of excitement the Lords agreed to a compromise, which meant yielding to nearly all the Liberal demands. ^{Compromise, 1910} The Parliament Act which was then passed is still in force. Under this law the Lords can only delay a law which has been passed by a majority of the House of Commons.

The government was now able to go on with its programme of social reform and with imposing the taxation that this programme made necessary.

IV

While the dispute with the Lords was going on there had also been a fierce agitation for 'votes for women'. ^{Women} For the last two generations—since the time of Florence Nightingale—women of the middle classes had been struggling to get free from their position of dependence and inferiority. A good deal had been done. For instance, a married woman at last had a right to any money she earned. Women had slowly and with great difficulty won the right to go to universities as students, into the teaching and medical professions, into the civil service, and into business. ^{What had gone before} As women began to take more part in public life they became more and more to want the right to vote. Just as the Chartists had thought that workers would get what they wanted if only they had votes, so the 'suffragettes' thought that women's problems would be settled if they could express their opinions through Parliament. When the Liberal government got in, the suffragettes thought they saw their ^{The Liberals do nothing}

chance and began to agitate in good earnest. But Mr Asquith was not at all eager to meet their demands, and the longer he delayed the more furious and the more active they became.

The suffragettes mean to be listened to

They organized huge processions through the streets of London. They interrupted political meetings by shouting for 'Votes for Women' and making it impossible for any speaker to be heard. On one occasion two suffragettes padlocked themselves to the railings outside the House of Commons and shouted their slogans. The King, the ministers and the leading members of Parliament were continually pestered wherever they were to be found. Policemen were assaulted, windows were broken, corrosives were dropped into pillar boxes to destroy the letters there, pictures in museums were slashed, buildings were burnt, bullets were fired at trains, bombs were placed in churches. Mrs Despard, Mrs Pankhurst and her two daughters, and other leaders, young and old, were repeatedly sent to prison and when they came out were welcomed as heroines by their followers.

Padlocked to railings

In face of this agitation the government had a bad time. When they tried to make some concession to the women's demands they were defeated by the Conservatives, at first on a technical point and later by a vote in the Lords. When they tried to restore order by more severe prison sentences the women starved themselves in prison until public opinion forced the government to let them out.

Hunger strike

The end of the story was very much like that of the peasants' revolt described in the second volume of this history. That is, the suffragettes did not at the time get what they wanted. But ten years later, after the agitation had died down, they did. Women now vote on an equal footing with men and have an equal right to seek election to the House of Commons. Like the peasants, and like the Chartists, women have found that the granting of their demands has not altogether solved their

problems In industry, for instance, women are generally still paid at a lower rate for piece-work

V

But there were yet more difficult problems The Ireland Liberals found that, to defeat the Conservatives over anything that the Conservatives considered really important, it was not enough to have a majority in the Commons even now that the powers of the House of Lords were limited One of the things which the Conservatives considered really important was the question of Ireland For many years the Irish had been demanding Home Rule that is, freedom to rule themselves (like Canada and Australia) and not to be governed from Westminster Three times Mr Gladstone (the great Liberal Prime Minister under Queen Victoria) had introduced bills to give them at least part of what they wanted Each time he had failed to convince his own party of the justice of his case and had been defeated Now the Liberals were convinced, and in 1912 they passed a Home Rule Bill, 1912 through the Commons Now the Lords could only delay bills passed by the Commons, two years should have seen the measure in force

Then the Conservatives played their last card The inhabitants of Ulster, most of whom were Protestants and many of whom were descended from the Scotch and English settlers of the seventeenth century, hated the idea of separating from England and of being governed by an Irish parliament in which south of Ireland Catholics were bound to be in a majority The Conservatives began to encourage them to plan a rising against the new act and to persuade the officers of the English army not to fight them if they rose The leader of the Ulstermen was Sir Edward Carson, who had recently held office in a Conservative government The plans for Ulster's resistance received the blessing of another Conservative leader and future Prime Minister Mr Bonar Law said 'I can imagine no length of resistance to which

Ulster will go in which I shall not be ready to support them '

By 1914, the position in Ireland looked black. It seemed there must be civil war. In England no one quite knew what to do with the suffragettes, and, more important, the workers were dissatisfied. Prices were rising and wages—if rising at all—were rising more slowly. The workers, through the Trades Unions, were once more organizing big strikes, socialist ideas were steadily spreading through the country. Then suddenly a problem arose abroad so great as to sweep all these aside.

CHAPTER 59

THE WORLD JUST BEFORE AND DURING THE WAR (1914 TO 1918)

THE reader has seen that Imperialists such as Mr Joseph Chamberlain had realized that one way for a modern manufacturing country to settle its home problems—at any rate for a time—is to get an Empire abroad. The proof that he was in one way right is the fact that Britain did—in spite of slumps and set-backs—continue to be one of the most prosperous countries in the world up to 1914, and continued to lead in 'The Race for Trade'. But, in factory production and in growth of population, other nations were fast catching up with Britain. France, Germany, Holland, Belgium, Japan had, for the last forty years or so, been at a stage when their statesmen, too, believed that the easiest way to settle their home problems was to build up a colonial or any other sort of Empire. The United States did not join very hotly in the jostling scramble for two reasons. First, because she still had undeveloped country and undeveloped minerals in her own territories, and secondly, because she had all along managed to keep Central and Southern America largely to herself as her 'sphere of influence'. An Empire settles problems for a time
Other countries think so too

Since the statesmen of each country believed in this way of getting rich, as soon as any one particular country got a piece of territory statesmen in all other countries felt both annoyance and fear. They felt fear because

States some-
times swal-
low each
other

for hundreds of years they had believed that it was necessary to keep what they called 'The Balance of Power'. No one state must ever again be as strong as France had been under Louis XIV, or later under Napoleon, and be able to dictate to the rest. This was really quite a natural feeling, for, as European statesmen very well knew, an Empire can be sometimes made up without going to the tropics. For instance, much earlier, Austria had built hers up by swallowing Hungary and later a number of small and most unwilling Balkan peoples. In the eighteenth century Poland had been divided among the other powers. Because of this idea that there must be a balance of power in Europe, because Europe was made up of swallows and those who did not want to be swallowed, the governments of different states had made all sorts of alliances with each other—some open and some secret. In the south-east of Europe

The Balkans

—among the Balkan states—feeling was particularly tense. Austria in the last century had been one of the 'swallowing' powers and the old Austrian Empire has been called 'a museum of races'. The people who most detested Austria's rule and who most wanted (with the Serbians) to set up a nation of their own, were the Southern Slavs. They and the Serbians spoke, and speak, a language rather like Russian and belong to a race related to the Russians. In any trouble that might arise in Europe one or other of the Balkan peoples was sure to see a chance to fight for their own freedom.

II

Look back

Two of the strongest European powers felt themselves bitter rivals. The governments, and to some extent even the peoples of France and Germany hated one another. To understand why this was, the reader will have to go back a little. In the first place 'Germany', as such, was something new. There had, ever since the time of the Romans, been many German-speaking states, but after Napoleon's defeat and chiefly under Bismarck,

Bismarck

a celebrated Prussian statesman, most of these states had become more and more closely united. But there were border states whose population was part German, part French. The Franco-Prussian war, of 1870-1871, had left France very sore because she was defeated and the border provinces of Alsace and Lorraine had been taken away from her. They were important to the growing industries of both countries because under their soil were rich deposits of coal and iron. Germany's ruler in 1914—the Kaiser William II—had a good deal of personal power. Through his mother he was a grandson of Queen Victoria, and a strange, vain, and in many ways childish man. This is, for instance, the absurd way in which he spoke in a public speech of the building up of the German Navy, whose growth was one of the things that soon alarmed Britain into an alliance with Germany's chief rival—France.

WII of 1871

The German Emperor,
1914

When as a little boy, I was allowed to visit Portsmouth and Plymouth hand in hand with kind aunts and friendly admirals, I admired the proud English ships in those two superb harbours. Then there woke in me the wish to build ships of my own like these some day, and when I was grown up to possess as fine a Navy as the English.

Childish
politics

Equally foolish things were written and said by the other and still more absolute monarch, the Emperor of Russia, Nicholas II. During the ten years before war actually broke out, still sillier things were written in the newspapers of all the twenty-eight countries that finally took part in the struggle. To this day the children of these nations are taught in their history books absolutely contradictory things about the causes of the war. Historians written for English and American schools often say that Britain came into the war to defend 'Gallant little Belgium' across whose lands the German troops marched to attack France, to defend the sanctity of treaties (Germany had promised not to invade Belgium, or Holland) and to 'make the world safe for democracy', while much is generally made of England's reluctance to go to war.

What many
English and
American
historians say

What a
German
School his-
tory says

A history written for the youngest children in German schools tells a different story. Do you remember, it asks its little readers, the fairy tale about Snow White, the little girl who grew up in the house of her beautiful stepmother? Every day the stepmother went to her magic looking-glass and said

'Mirror, mirror on the wall,
Which is the fairest one of all?'

For years the mirror answered 'You, Oh Queen!'

Germany is
Snow White

Then at last one day it answered 'Snow White is the fairest!' upon which the jealous stepmother decided to kill Snow White. In the history of Europe, says this book, Snow White is the German Empire and the part of the wicked stepmother was played by the Allies who fought against her. While the young German Empire was weak, the Allies let her alone, but as soon as she grew into a country producing everything in abundance, then the jealous and pitiless Allies turned upon her. She was immediately hemmed in by 'a ring of steel'—out-numbered and defeated.

III

Do you be-
lieve either
account?

Though there may be a grain of truth in both, neither account of the origin of the war seems to be correct. Nor can boys and girls to-day be expected to be content with the explanation (still often given) that a war that involved so many nations started 'because' on the 26th day of July, 1914, the Archduke, who was heir to the Austrian throne, was assassinated by Serbians at Serajevo in Bosnia. This political murder by citizens of a country that had been swallowed in 1908 was indeed the spark that started the explosion. But with Europe as she was in 1914 there is no likelihood that a war could have been put off much longer. The real causes of the war were the system of solving home problems by looking for fresh territories and the scheme of secret alliances of whose existence only a few men in each country knew.

Or this?

When every country is armed heavily and expensively, when private firms make money out of selling guns, when every country is nervous, when every government wants to strike first if there is to be any striking, then some time or another, to use an old phrase, 'the muskets go off of themselves'

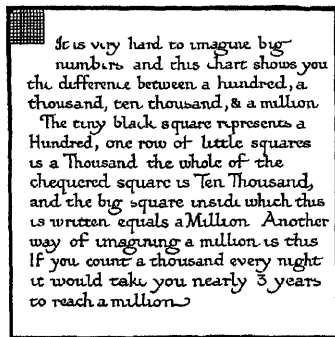
After the murder of the Archduke, Austria declared war on Serbia, Russia said she would defend the Serbs, the German Emperor declared that if she did he would back Austria and 'stand beside his friend in shining armour' On this France, the ally of Russia, declared war on Germany and Austria, German armies marched across Belgium to attack France, England sent an army to stop the German army—and so on and so on, till twenty-eight nations were at war

IV

As the dreadful years of the war went on the struggle grew in horror New countries joined in till almost the whole world was fighting, and in every country scientists diligently invented, and workers tirelessly made, new strange weapons of death Death fell out of the sky as Death the bombing aeroplanes swooped to get better aim, death rolled on the wind in dark clouds of poison gas, death rose from the sea in the grey wet gleam of the submarine, and—tearing up the fruitful soil, mixing the limbs of trees with the limbs of men, the bricks of quiet towns with the diligent hands that had made them—year after year thundered the ceaseless, maddening clamour of the guns. In Germany, Russia and Austria there also came slow death, quietly killing the children in their homes from want and hunger, after famine came the diseases that famine brings With suffering came shameful hatred and suspicion—'God punish England', cried the Germans, their newspapers telling them terrible stories of British atrocities In England there was 'spy fever'. Harmless people were imprisoned and not a word might be said in favour of the 'wicked Germans', in France

Oppression it was the same In each country the Pacifists, those who did not believe that war is a good way of settling international disputes and who therefore refused to fight, were treated as traitors In some countries they were shot, in all imprisoned Not counting civilians who died of starvation and disease, nine million young men

were killed in the war — each man chosen for his fitness and good health In France alone over a thousand whole towns were destroyed, the war cost millions of pounds And what, the reader asks, was bought at this great price? To-day, the situation in the world is, so most good observers agree, very



MILLION and THOUSAND

much what it was in 1914 There is, of course, an added bitterness It has been produced by so much suffering

A poet, Wilfred Owen, perhaps the greatest of those killed in the war, is indignant at what he calls 'the old Lie' 'Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori'—that is 'Sweet and seemly it is to die for one's country' War is horrible he cries, in poem after poem Only his own death on the Western Front a week before the Armistice stilled his truth-telling voice

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs
And towards our distant rest began to trudge
Men marched asleep Many had lost their boots,
But limped on, blood-shod All went lame, all blind,
Drunk with fatigue, deaf even to the hoots
Of gas-shells dropping softly behind

If you could see, the poet goes on, the agony of the one who did not get his gas-mask on in time, 'If you too could pace behind the wagon that we flung him in'—

My friend you would not tell with such high zest
To children, ardent for some desperate glory
The old Lie Dulce et decorum est
Pro patria mori

V

Two new things came out of the war—neither of them the work of the statesmen whose policies at home and abroad led up to it. One is the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—the new Russia. In the last stages of the war, when there was starvation and destruction in Russia such as had never been seen before, the people rose, and led by the Bolsheviks—now the Communist party—overthrew the Czar's government and set up instead the 'Dictatorship of the Workers'. But for the war the Russian government might not for many years—perhaps never—have been weakened enough to make possible the victory of the most oppressed working class in Europe. To-day in Russia—on an enormous scale—are being tried all the new methods that socialists all over the world, ever since the time when Sir Thomas More wrote his *Utopia*, have believed to be those that can bring peace and happiness to the nations. These methods are the public ownership of lands and factories, production for use and not for profit, and equality of men and women and of different races, and the abolition of class. Some socialists believe that the violent revolution in which, under the leadership of Lenin and Trotsky, the Czar's government was overthrown, to have been wrong. But all socialists—and there are socialists in every country in the world—think that now at any rate, broadly speaking, the Soviets are being run on the right lines. Those who are not socialists, and who believe that it was extremely wicked to take the estates and factories from those who formerly owned them, agree with the socialists on one

The USSR,
1917

The Revolution in Russia

point—that Russia from being one of the most backward countries in Europe is now becoming one of the most prosperous. Her friends see in this new hope for the peoples of the world, her enemies a new and terrible danger to every government.

VI

The League
of Nations

Another thing that would not have come into the world but for the war is The League of Nations. The object for which the League was started was to try to get nations to settle their disputes by arbitration instead of by war. But besides working for this main object there is much important work which a League of Nations can undertake. For instance, some of the worst consequences of the competition between business men could be avoided if all countries agreed—whether their workers are organized into strong Trade Unions or not—that none of their citizens should be obliged to work more than eight hours a day. This would meet the employers' (perfectly true) argument that he is obliged to overwork his employee because the other fellow does and will otherwise get the market. At Geneva, where the League has its headquarters, the statesmen of all nations can meet and discuss their differences.

Up till now the League has on several disastrous occasions, not been strong enough to make warlike nations obey it—Japan, Italy and Germany, for instance, have all defied it. But most of those who care for peace, who remember the last war and dread the horrors of another, see in the League the best hope of peace in the world to-day. The present writers, like a majority of the British people, feel that private people ought to do everything in their power to strengthen the League, and to do everything they can to make the statesmen who assemble at Geneva understand how strong is the wish for peace of the peoples, if unfortunately not of the governments of the world.

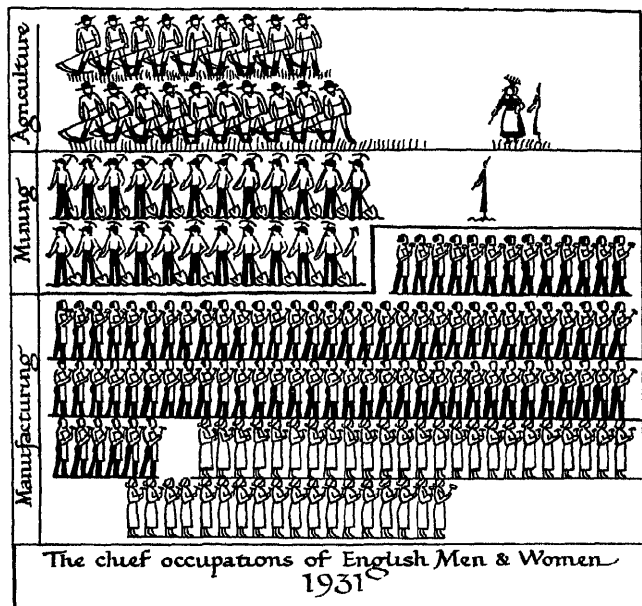
CHAPTER 60

AFTER THE WAR TO THE PRESENT DAY (1918 TO 1936)

WHEN the war was over and Britain was at peace again it was found that the difficulties and problems of the first months of 1914 had only been swept out of sight. They had been shelved and not solved. Most of them were indeed more urgent than ever. Prices had more than doubled, most of Ireland was in a state of active revolt, foreign competition was keener. Almost the only question that had answered itself was that of whether women were or were not to be given votes. In Britain, when the fighting was over, the Conservatives withdrew their opposition, bills were passed which gave women the right to vote, and to sit both on Town and County Councils and in Parliament.

II

Other nations were now competing keenly for the trade of the world (see the chart on page 98). Countries that had been neutral during the whole or part of the war, had been able to build up a new trade in manufactured goods, while British, French and German factories had been busy in supplying their armies. For instance, before the war America had traded abroad chiefly in such things as wheat, oil and raw cotton. But during the first years of the war, while she was still neutral, she had built up a trade in such things as motor-cars, and

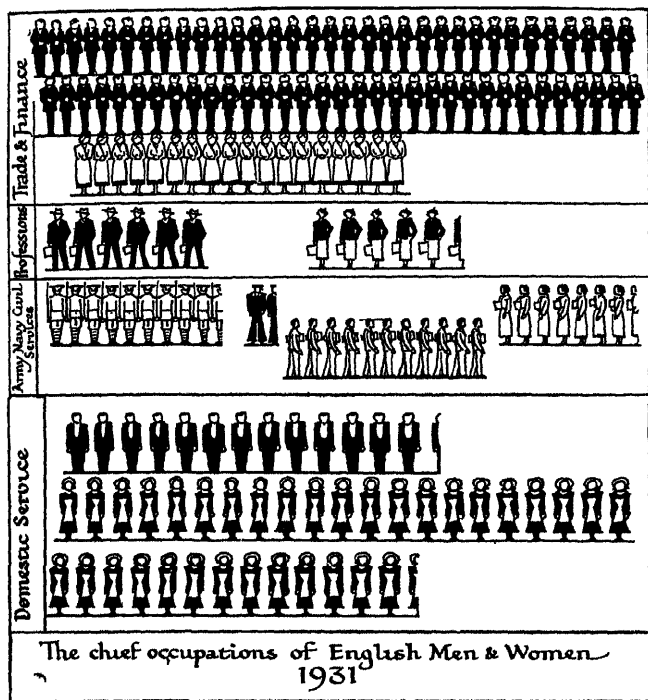


Each figure = approximately 50,000

If you compare this chart with the one on page 70 you will be between 1841 and 1931. Notice for one thing the tremendous growth in professions. It is interesting to compare each group in the two

electrical machinery. The Japanese had also forged ahead as a manufacturing nation.

In Britain factory-owners found themselves faced with the costly work of re-equipping their works whose machinery was now out of date or had been adapted for the making of clothing or munitions for the army. If



notice that a great many things have changed in the ninety years in population and the increase in the number of women in trades and charts

British factory-owners were to compete in 'The Race for Trade' they must somehow cut costs. But with the prices of food, clothes and everything that they needed still soaring, their employees strenuously resisted wage cuts which would drive them and their families below the Poverty Line.

III

Short 'Post-
War Boom',
1919-1920

Unemploy-
ment
Insurance

Other
'Social
Services'

In Britain there was a short 'boom' directly after the war. People were short of everything and for a while there was no unemployment. In the building trade, for instance, there was for a while none at all, but so much work that there was competition for skilled men. In London, a city of seven millions, exactly thirty new houses had been built in five years, though at least thirty thousand were needed, and only the most urgent repairs had been done. But by 1920 there were signs in other trades that the boom was coming to an end. Soon unemployment began to be a more serious problem than it had ever been before. Since 1911 there had been, in a few trades, a scheme of Unemployment Insurance, and a Coalition government decided that it was necessary to extend the number of trades to which this insurance applied. By 1920 practically all workers in the country except those who were employed on farming or in domestic service had been brought under the scheme. Each man or woman, when in work, had to pay so much a week towards an insurance fund, the employer also had to contribute so much for every person employed, while so much was added out of taxes. If the insured person was out of work he or she received so much a week and so much for each dependant for so many months.

In other ways this policy of providing social services continued to grow, for though the Liberal party which had originally started it was growing weaker and was indeed gradually dropping out of politics, this part of their programme was taken over by the two other parties—Conservatives and Labour. Readers will see from the chart on page 124 that old social services, such as the feeding of poor school children, were increased and new ones were set up, among the most important of the new ones has been the provision of Infant Welfare Centres where mothers can get free medical advice for their babies. The chart shows, too, the increase in Housing

subsidies Town and County Councils were encouraged to build, out of the rates, some at least of the new houses that were so urgently needed. For each house they were given a contribution out of taxes paid by the country in general. Some people—both orthodox Socialists and orthodox Conservatives—believed that this way of using a small part of the nation's wealth to improve the lot of the poorest citizens could not really solve the problems of the time. The Socialists thought that it only touched a small part of the trouble, while many Conservatives believed that Social Services were not worth what they cost in taxes and that 'Private Enterprise' would have provided the same things more economically. But the social services were undoubtedly successful in preventing the sort of revolutionary movements here that rose after the war in many European countries (in Germany, Hungary, and Italy, for instance). Many observers abroad thought that there would also be revolution in England between 1919 and 1926, for there were many strikes, the longest and biggest being those in the mining industry.

IV

During the war miners had earned good wages. Their work was necessary for the making of munitions and for all the immense amount of factory work needed in modern warfare. But, after the fighting was over, all employers began to feel foreign competition. The coalowners had an additional trouble, oil was now replacing coal as a fuel for ships and factories. If British coal was to compete in a shrinking world market it was absolutely necessary that it should be sold more cheaply, and if it was to sold more cheaply the cost of hewing, raising and transporting it must be reduced.

The owners wanted the miners to go back to their pre-war wages. It was better for the miners, said they, to take lower wages than to ruin the industry and to have no wages at all. The miners replied that if the mining

Capital and
Labour

What the
owners said

What the
miners said

industry were properly organized and if so much were not taken out of it by the owners of the land under which the coal lay, and over which the trucks had to pass on their way to rail and dock, then there would be no need for the reduction in wages. They would fight it, for it must sink tens of thousands of miners and their families into abject poverty.

Coal Sub-
sidy, 1925

This question roused intense public interest. Many of those who were not socialists believed that the only hope for what had been Britain's greatest industry lay in drastic reorganization and some form of public control. The owners declared that public control would do no good, that they could not all agree on a big scheme of reorganization, that there were now no profits, but that they were running the mines at a loss. They must reduce wages. The government then voted twenty-four million pounds for the coal industry. For nine months this sum would make up the difference between what the owners said they could pay and what the miners said they would take. Great efforts were now made to reach a settlement, for it was thought probable that if, when the time was up, the owners did not increase the wages they were offering, the miners would strike rather than accept. Then the whole of organized labour all over the country might come out on strike to help them. By the last day of April 1926, the government subsidy had all been used, the miners struck against the wages offered by the owners, and on the 4th May a General Strike of

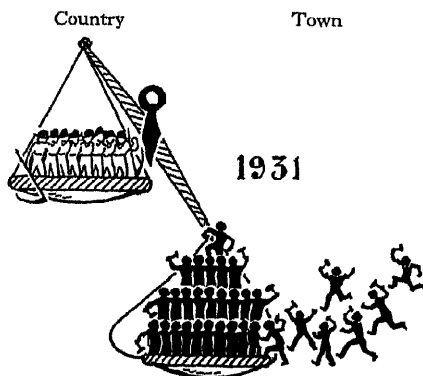
General
Strike, 1926

nearly all Trade Unions was declared, only those whose work it was to bring and distribute necessary food to the towns offering to remain at their jobs. After just over a week the strike, of all except the miners themselves, was called off. To this day the causes of the collapse of the strike are not clear, but there were two things that certainly helped to defeat it. One was the declaration by Sir John Simon in the House of Commons that the Judges had given it as their opinion that such a strike was illegal, that every striker could be sued for damages, and every

Trade Union leader might have to pay compensation 'to the utmost farthing of his personal possessions'. Another was that the government had used the nine months of the subsidy time to prepare volunteer services in many departments and this made it more difficult for the men than for the employers to hold out. In the end the miners were obliged to go back to the pits on yet worse terms, but the triumph of the owners did not save the coal industry.

V

The provision of more social services and the keeping up of wages by means of strikes having both been tried



Each figure = 1 million

At the last Census this was the proportion between town and country

without bringing back prosperity, another remedy for bad trade has now been applied. In 1929 began a slump so bad that an 'Economic Blizzard' was said to be blowing. The remedy that Mr Joseph Chamberlain and his followers had always advocated was now tried. This remedy is 'Protection', the keeping out of foreign-made goods by means of tariffs. Like almost all the

other countries in the world Britain is now surrounded by a tariff wall—that is, so much has to be paid on all foreign-made goods imported

VI

Ireland Nor had the war ended Imperial troubles After several years' fighting Southern Ireland was given Home Rule In India, too, there had been much discontent, and, as in Ireland, there was a strong feeling that the time had come for the country to be controlled by those who lived in it In India a favourite way of expressing dissatisfaction was for a whole town or even province to declare for 'non-co-operation' No British goods were bought, no British taxes paid If an important British official drove through the streets they would be deserted and every shop shut A Round Table Conference of Indian and European rulers and important people met in London in 1931 and a new constitution has since been set up to meet some of the demands of the Indians

VII

The last fifteen years Above all, the war did not solve the problem of international peace The Treaty of Versailles left many countries discontented, and matters have been made worse by events in Germany and Italy

Politics in Europe

Fascism

For the Middle class ?

In both these countries there were strong revolutionary movements In Italy Mussolini—who had been a Socialist leader—suddenly turned to another policy In Germany Hitler took advantage of a deadlock between those who stood for old-fashioned Capitalism and the Socialists and Communists who stood against them, but who could not otherwise agree He formed a new party which, its followers believed, represented the interests of poorer middle-class people Both the Fascists in Italy and the Nazis in Germany got power very largely by declaring for a semi-Socialist programme There was to be equality between rich and poor—no more millionaires—there was to be a discipline which would make the

AFTER THE WAR TO THE PRESENT DAY 147

nation great again—no more wasters—the State would control industry for the benefit of everybody. In both countries progressive men and women who supported the Fascist leaders are surprised at the state of their country. Both Fascist parties also told their followers that they had an economic plan. One of the three chief Nazi leaders, General Goering (who in April 1936, was made economic controller of the country), wrote a book in which he had something to say of German economics.

Germany's
Economic

When I am asked about our economic policy I say 'Look at the honest faces of our Storm Troopers! That is our economic policy, and it is—Germany!'

Readers of this history may consider that rather too vague. It turned out that the discipline that was to make these Fascist countries great was in each case to be used chiefly to make them warlike. In Italy all little boys must begin to train to be soldiers at seven years old, and Italy has made war on Abyssinia in defiance of the League of Nations. Nazi Germany has used her new discipline to arm as fast as possible with the most modern weapons. A German army stands ready on the Rhine, also in defiance of the League of Nations, and so far Germany refuses to make any peace treaty with the Soviet Union.

Fascists say
'Discipline
means war'

The international situation in 1936 is dangerous. First Japan, then Italy and last Germany have all successfully defied the League of Nations. 'Disarmament Conferences' have been held but have come to nothing, and to-day the nations of the world are spending their revenues from taxes and tariffs not on better education, houses, sports-grounds and health, but on battleships, tanks, gas shelters and bombing aeroplanes.

The situation
in Europe

CHAPTER 61

SCIENCE AND TECHNICS TO-DAY

IN Britain and in other countries great progress has been made in science during the last twenty years. Professor Einstein has given physicists many new ideas about Matter. He followed up the work of such men as Newton and Faraday—that is, he observed and considered facts about the light which comes from the sun and stars, and also the behaviour of electric currents and magnetic fields. As a consequence of his theory of Relativity and of the work of many other mathematicians and experimentalists of all nations, modern physicists have reached some most puzzling facts, about Time, Space, and what the Universe is made of. The theory that was believed from the time of Newton till about fifty years ago that all matter—your body, this book, the ground outside—is ultimately made of the same sort of raw material still holds, but the theory that this consisted of minute hard particles has been found not to fit the new facts. It seems logical to say that ‘a part of something can’t be nothing’, but when the atom is taken to pieces the parts of which it is made up seem not to be matter at all, but motion or energy. Mr Dampier Whetham, in his *History of Science*, puts it like this

Matter was analysed into molecules and atoms, and then atoms were analysed into protons and electrons. These in turn have been dissolved into sources of radiation (energy) or wave groups, into a mere ‘set of events’ which proceed outward from a centre. About what exists at the centre or about

what carries the waves we know nothing There
seems a limit to the accuracy of possible knowledge

The difficulty—he goes on—is this the light by which
the research worker tries to observe it ‘ knocks the electron



With one tractor one man can now plough four furrows

out of position ’ Electrons, out of which all solid matter
is built up, seem in fact to be ‘ disembodied ghosts ’

New discoveries are constantly being made in this
field of science, so that it may be that soon physicists will

once more have settled ideas about Matter. But during the last twenty years more important facts have been discovered in physics than in the centuries since Galileo and Newton. No one ought to feel impatient with the physicists if they shut their laboratory doors or put up notices saying 'Don't disturb', or 'No more bulletins about the nature of Matter for the present'.

Applied
Electro-
Physics

Meanwhile the application of electro-physics has given us, among other new things, the radio, the 'talkies', and beam wireless. The interaction of technics and science spoken of in Chapter 57 is now closer than ever. The most important facts in the new physics have been discovered through the use of tremendous electric currents, exceedingly powerful electro-magnets and highly specialized cameras—all new tools. The new technics were born of the research of scientists in past centuries. We can only guess at what new technical advances may be made as a result of the research which is going on to-day.

Science and
Technics
help each
other

By the way, if any readers of this book should want later to take part in, or even really to understand this new work, they should realize that the key to it is mathematics. Even the bulletin is sure to be issued in the form of an equation.

II

Meanwhile research workers in other branches of science have luckily not had to wait for this bulletin. The old ideas about Matter are good enough for many scientific as well as many practical purposes. Something of a recent discovery in biology is probably already known to the reader.

In 1912 Sir Frederic Gowland Hopkins showed that young rats fed on chemically pure food ceased to grow, but that growth began again when minute quantities of fresh milk were added.

Vitamins

It was on this work that the discovery of what are now known as 'Vitamins' was based. The Vitamins have been named 'A', 'B', and so on.

Between 1927 and 1929 a number of independent workers found that sunlight (real or artificial), if allowed to act either on a child or on the food it ate, produced the same effect as Vitamin D in preventing rickets, and that this Vitamin could be made from yeast in such a way as to provide 'bottled sunlight'. Vitamin C is present in fresh green plants and in certain fruits, and its absence was what caused sailors who lived on salt pork and biscuits to suffer so terribly from scurvy. (See the paragraphs on Captain Cook's voyages in Volume III.)

Discoveries about the action of certain glands in the ^{Glands} body such as the thyroid, pituitary and pancreas—have also led to important practical results, and it is now possible for babies who before these discoveries would have become dwarfs or idiots, to grow up into healthy normal people, and to keep in health for years many people who, a generation ago, would have died of diabetes in a few months.

Danger from infectious fevers is also being tackled in a way which is really an extension of the methods used first in the East and then by Edward Jenner (spoken of in Chapter 42). The fact has long been known that having measles or scarlet fever protects the sufferer either permanently or for some years from another attack. Two hundred years ago Turkish doctors had protected people from smallpox by giving it them in a mild form, and Jenner by giving them cow-pox by means of vaccination. Doctors are now trying to protect children against infection from typhoid, measles, diphtheria, and other diseases, in the case of some fevers with great success. So far that horrible ailment 'the common cold' is one that refuses to yield.

III

Very interesting work has been done on the even more complex questions of what makes animals and human beings behave as they do, how they learn, what makes them angry or tired, what gives them 'nervous break-
Why did you do it?

downs' The name of a Russian, Professor Pavlov (who died this year—1936), is particularly connected with studies of how animals learn and put facts together He observed dogs If a gong was rung, or a square of paper was always put down before they were fed, the dogs 'learned' that this meant dinner, and their mouths would water He discovered a great deal about how exactly dogs can tell the difference between different sounds and shapes by noticing how much he could alter the note of the gong or the size or shape of the paper before his dogs' mouths would cease to water This study of behaviour has been applied to other creatures, and to human beings, particularly small babies, and much has been learned Along the same sort of lines people are trying to find out what it means when we say that so-and-so is 'tired' by such activities as learning lessons or teaching Dr Freud, the Austrian, is the leader of another group who study behaviour, but they are interested only in human beings, and chiefly in emotions such as fear, love and hate Sometimes these emotions get misplaced, and people fear love, or hate most unsuitable objects

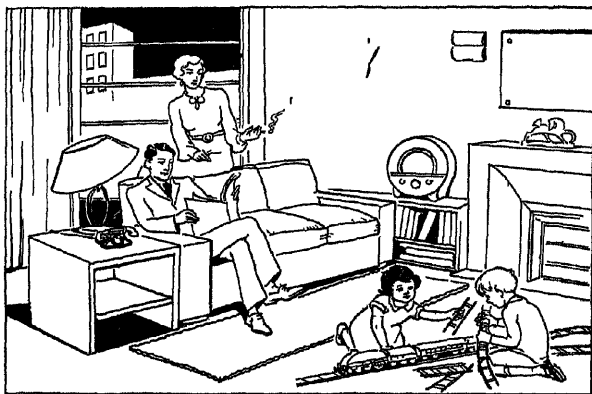
Why do you
like it?

On the whole research into human behaviour has made it seem that we do not act for 'sensible' reasons nearly as much as was supposed a hundred years ago, that there is less difference between man's feelings and ways of forming habits and those of other animals and also between those of civilized and primitive people This result has partly been brought about by the study by anthropologists of such peoples as South Sea islanders and African Pigmies At first it seemed to travellers and explorers simply wrong-headed or funny if a tribesman took off his shoes as a sign of respect Now it has been remembered that it is really no more wrong-headed or funny than for a civilized man to take off his hat Both are customs, and very likely none the worse for that

Primitive
Tribes

III

There have been great changes too in architecture and New materials in engineering and in making and designing a great many things from motor-cars to cigarette-cases and clothes. These changes have been brought about largely by the fact that new materials have been made. Such things as



IMAGINARY PICTURE OF A PROSPEROUS MODERN FAMILY
Compare the furniture and dresses with those in the picture on page 50

new types of concrete, plywood, celluloid and bakelite, are all more or less plastic. That is to say, they can be moulded into shape, and they are lighter and tougher than metals. In fabrics the same sort of tendency can be seen. Stuffs, such as knitted wools, or cottons into which threads of rubber have been woven and which will stretch and mould themselves, have replaced the older materials for many purposes. The clothing worn by the reader is much lighter and less stiff than that worn by boys or girls in any previous age.

Many people think that we are leaving the Iron Age behind and that in ten or twenty years the new light, plastic materials, and newer metals such as aluminium will be used for many purposes for which heavier materials such as glass, iron, steel, copper and bronze are now employed

Houses and factories are better warmed, and are lighted by larger windows by day and at night by electric lights whose brightness would have astonished our ancestors

The oldest
crafts of all

Nor have the oldest crafts of all remained unchanged. The fisherman and the farmer too use new tools. On the steam or motor trawler there are bright lights on deck for hauling in the nets at night, on the farm, tractors and petrol engines do much of the heavy work

IV

The study of the past—that is of the arts and knowledge that we inherit has also progressed. Archaeologists have discovered traces of civilizations that had been forgotten for thousands of years, and of migrations that throw a new light on how the same knowledge and crafts were learned by peoples living far apart, while in history, particularly economic history, important research is going on

The Lessons
of History

Perhaps at this point it should be suggested that what are called the 'lessons of history' will be found to be of very real use when readers leave school, go out into the world, and, as citizens, take their part in its affairs

What are these lessons? Readers even of this short book have seen, for instance, how important science has been in the history of man, and how the gradual conquest of nature has been accomplished. A study of history also shows that 'social relationships' make all the difference. It matters immensely to a country whether it is a 'go-ahead' or a 'keep-as-you-are' class which is uppermost. The present writers would also add that it

becomes plain that what really matters about a system of government and economics is, whether the advantages of civilization really reach the mass of the inhabitants of a country. Again, the study of history shows that things do not happen of themselves, or because of 'Great Men', but are brought about by big groups of men and women. Also that it is often difficult to discover what exactly a given struggle between different groups in a country is about, because both sides use slogans. Sometimes these will be deliberate red herrings, but more often the slogans will concern something which seems to 'go with' the main point. For instance, as readers have seen, several times in the history of England people believed a particular kind of religion was bound up with a particular sort of government, so that there might be a struggle that appeared to be against 'Popery', but which was really against the absolute power of kings. Such points students of history will remember before making up their minds with what group of their fellow-countrymen they mean to act.

Last of all, a study of the past suggests that the period of history just ahead seems likely to be the most interesting of all.

V

In the world of to-day we have things for which generations of men longed in vain. We have furnaces and electricity to warm and light us and protect us from the cold and darkness that made primitive men afraid, we know how to make the earth bring forth harvests such as were never seen before, and, because of new ways of transport, the products of the whole earth can be everywhere enjoyed. We have made machines of exquisite precision with whose help we fly through the air, speak across the world, and record our thoughts and actions. Our forefathers, and still more the women who went before us, were old, their bodies exhausted, at an age when we are still young, still learning, still hopeful.

You will live long Readers of this book can expect—in the course of nature—a much longer and much healthier life than any former generation of boys and girls. If, as you grow older, your eye or some other delicate mechanism of your body fails in the tasks you lay upon it, nine times out of ten the skill of doctors and technicians will put the trouble right.

The world is open to you The heavy work of production is done by machines, the whole world is open to your eyes and ears and senses. You have a dozen ways of acquainting yourself with the life of past ages, with distant places, and with natural facts which the great men of the past longed in vain to know. All these things, the toil, the genius, the perseverance of your ancestors has laid at your feet. Nature has been conquered. But there remain many problems. The need to solve them is urgent because a threat hangs over you. As John Bunyan said three hundred years ago, at the very gate of Heaven there lies a by-way to Hell. To-day, if man cannot solve the problem of how to live with his fellow-men in justice and friendship, all the new life-giving discoveries will turn—are turning—to weapons of destruction, more terrible than any ever before devised. The problem of how men are to be reconciled, how justice is to be established between them remains unsolved, or if the right way has been found, most of mankind is still ignorant of it. That is the adventure—it may be a very long and arduous one—for which you, who are young, must prepare yourselves with all the knowledge you can acquire, all the kindness you possess and all the courage of which you are masters. The new discoveries must be used to bring life and not death. Civilization must not fall by its own achievements. Surely in every country in the world—among all the millions of boys and girls who to-day look forward with hopeful eyes, there will be found spirits resolute and able to carry the work of past ages into a new, triumphant phase.

Nature has been conquered
 Your problem is . .

POINTS TO NOTICE ABOUT PART IV

1900 to 1936

1 There were three political parties in England—the Conservatives, the Liberals and a Labour party. Each had different ideas as to how prosperity could be kept.

2 When the Liberals were in power they introduced more 'social services' and had a clash with the House of Lords. Women wanted the right to vote and trouble was brewing in Ireland.












3 At this point the European War broke out, which involved frightful destruction.

4 On the Continent the old Russian Empire became the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics and the League of Nations was formed.










5 The world to-day still faces the problems of 1914.

6 There have been great scientific advances, while in technics new materials and new inventions have made the pace of change more rapid than ever before.

TABLE OF KINGS

TUDORS	1509	HENRY 8th (son of Henry 7th) died 1547	
	1547	EDWARD 6th (son of Henry 8th) died 1553	
	1553	MARY (sister of Edward 6th) died 1558	
	1558	ELIZABETH (sister of Mary) died 1603	
STUARTS	1603	JAMES 1st (son of Mary, Queen of Scots and great great-grandson of Henry 7th) died 1625	
	1625	CHARLES 1st (son of James 1st) beheaded 1649	
	1649	' COMMONWEALTH under PROTECTOR OLIVER CROMWELL died 1658 followed by his son Richard resigned 1659	
STUARTS	1660	CHARLES 2nd (son of Charles 1st) died 1685	
	1685	JAMES 2nd (brother of Charles 2nd) fled to France 1688	
	1688	WILLIAM 3rd Prince of Orange " (married to Mary daughter of James 2nd) his horse fell and killed him 1702	
	1702	ANNE (daughter of James 2nd) died 1714	

AND THEIR DATES

HANOVIANS	1714	GEORGE 1st (great grandson of James 1st) died 1727	
	1727	GEORGE 2nd (son of George 1st) died 1760	
	1760	GEORGE 3rd (grandson of George 2nd) died 1820	
	1820	GEORGE 4th (son of George 3rd) died 1830	
	1830	WILLIAM 4th (brother of George 4th) died 1837	
GUELPHS	1837	VICTORIA (niece of William 4th) died 1901	
	1901	EDWARD 7th (son of Victoria) died 1910	
WINDSORS	1910	GEORGE 5th (son of Edward 7th) died 1936	
	1936	EDWARD 8th (son of George 5th) at present reigning	

BOOK LISTS
AND
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BOOKS

It ought to be possible for the reader of this book to get all or any of the books in this list from his or her Public Library (under the control of the County or Urban District Council). The list has been made up with the help of Mr L R McColvin, Hon Secretary of the Library Association, and there are no books in it which Public Libraries (in big towns) do not ordinarily stock. All Public Libraries are linked up with Central Libraries so that any Library should be able to get any book.

Country readers will generally find that their village or their nearest small town has in it (often attached to a school) a branch of the County Library whose Librarian will forward a request for any book to the County Library, the Regional Bureau, or if necessary to the National Central Library. In Mr McColvin's words, 'The machinery exists, the books are available. Most Municipal and County Librarians are keen to provide readers with the books and information they want with a minimum of delay. If there is any serious difficulty in getting books the remedy is to agitate for more money and help for the Libraries. The Libraries are planned to meet just such demands and should fulfil their function.'

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- The Sailing Ship* R and R C Anderson (Harrap)
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- The Directory of Museums and Art Galleries in the British Isles* Compiled by The Museums Association of Chaucer House, Malet Place, W C 1
(A complete guide for the planners of school journeys)
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STEADY INCREASE TO $4\frac{1}{2}$ MILLIONS BY 1600



BY 1500 AGAIN AN INCREASE TO $3\frac{1}{2}$ MILLIONS



BUT BY 1400 NUMBERS DROPPED TO $2\frac{1}{2}$ MILLIONS
ON ACCOUNT OF A PLAGUE CALLED "THE BLACK DEATH" IN 1348



BY 1340 4 MILLIONS



BY 1066 (THE NORMAN CONQUEST)
THE POPULATION INCREASED TO 2 MILLIONS



ROMAN BRITAIN



PREHISTORIC AGES

EACH WHOLE FIGURE
REPRESENTS
1 MILLION
OF POPULATION